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HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN

THE MYSTICISM OF MUSIC SOUND AND WORD

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The Sufi Message

VOLUME
II

THE SUFI MESSAGE

VOLUME II

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PREFACE

The Mysticism of Music, Sound, and Word presents an essential part of the—highly practical—philosophy of Hazrat Inayat Khan. Born a musician music and sound were for him the essence of life. Even when later he had to give up his practice of what in Indian philosophy is called struck music the unstruck music remained with him, and increasingly so. Not only did he enjoy it in his meditations and all through life, whether in silent nature or in the roaring streets of Manhattan. In its fullness it came out in his discourses and other presentations he made to the amazed and yet not fully understanding public of the West in the 'twenties. His realization of sound and music transformed his words into living beings, attuning the atmosphere, bringing inspiration to the public.

'I gave up my music because I had received from it all that I had to receive. To serve God one must sacrifice what is dearest to one; and so I sacrificed my music. I had composed songs; I sang and played the vina; and practising this music I arrived at a stage where I touched the Music of the Spheres. Then every soul became for me a musical note, and all life became music. Inspired by it I spoke to the people, and those who were attracted by my words listened to them instead of listening to my songs. Now, if I do anything, it is to tune souls instead of instruments; to harmonize people instead of notes. If there is anything in my philosophy, it is the law of harmony: that one must put oneself in harmony with oneself and with others. I have found in every word a certain musical value, a melody in every thought, harmony in every feeling; and I have tried to interpret the same thing, with clear and simple words, to those who used to listen to my music. I played the vina until my heart turned into this very instrument; then I offered this instrument to the divine Musician, the only musician existing. Since then I have become His flute; and when He chooses, He plays His music. The people give me credit for this music, which in reality is not due to me but to the Musician who plays on His own instrument.'

This music is presented in this volume in its many and various aspects. It contains four parts. In the *Mysticism of Sound* the basic philosophy is given in a wide context. Both the abstract and some very practical aspects are covered. *Music* presents the mystic aspects of music besides relating its philosophy to the practical side again. It presents a beautiful early view on Indian music and it relates music and colour. Moreover the psychic and healing powers are discussed. *The Power of the Word* and in *Cosmic Language* elaborate these influences both philosophically and practically. The book really may be called mysticism in daily life.

THE MYSTICISM OF SOUND

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CHAPTER I

THE SILENT LIFE

THE Life Absolute from which has sprung all that is felt, seen, and perceived, and into which all again merges in time, is a silent, motionless and eternal life which among the Sufis is called Zàt. Every motion that springs forth from this silent life is a vibration and a creator of vibrations. Within one vibration are created many vibrations; as motion causes motion so the silent life becomes active in a certain part, and creates every moment more and more activity, losing thereby the peace of the original silent life. It is the grade of activity of these vibrations that accounts for the various planes of existence. These planes are imagined to differ from one another, but in reality they cannot be entirely detached and made separate from one another. The activity of vibrations makes them grosser, and thus the earth is born of the heavens.

The mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms are the gradual changes of vibrations, and the vibrations of each plane differ from one another in their weight, breadth, length, colour, effect, sound and rhythm. Man is not only formed of vibrations, but he lives and moves in them; they surround him as the fish is surrounded by water, and he contains them within him as the tank contains water. His different moods, inclinations, affairs, successes and failures, and all conditions of life depend upon a certain activity of vibrations, whether these be thoughts, emotions or feelings. It is the direction of the activity of vibrations that accounts for the variety of things and beings. This vibratory activity is the basis of sensation and the source of all pleasure and pain; its cessation is the opposite of sensation. All sensations are caused by a certain grade of activity of vibration.

There are two aspects of vibrations, fine and gross, both containing varied degrees; some are perceived by the soul, some by the mind, and some by the eyes. What the soul perceives are the vibrations of the feelings; what the mind conceives are the vibrations of the thoughts; what the eyes see are the vibrations solidified from their ethereal state and turned into atoms which appear in the physical world, constituting the elements ether, air, fire, water and earth. The finest vibrations are imperceptible even to the soul. The soul itself is formed of these vibrations; it is their activity which makes it conscious.

Creation begins with the activity of consciousness, which may be called vibration, and every vibration starting from its original source is the same, differing only in its tone and rhythm caused by a greater or lesser degree of force behind it. On the plane of sound, vibration causes diversity of tone, and in the world of atoms, diversity of colour. It is by massing together that the vibrations become audible, but at each step towards the surface they multiply, and as they advance they materialize. Sound gives to the consciousness an evidence of its existence, although it is in fact the active part of consciousness itself which turns into sound. The knower so to speak becomes known to himself, in other words the consciousness bears witness to its own voice. It is thus that sound appeals to man. All things being derived from and formed of vibrations have sound hidden within them, as fire is hidden in flint; and each atom of the universe confesses by its tone, 'My sole origin is sound.' If any solid or hollow sonorous body is struck it will answer back, 'I am sound.'

Sound has its birth, death, sex, form, planet, god, colour, childhood, youth and age; but that volume of sound which is in the abstract sphere beyond the sphere of the concrete is the origin and basis of all sound.

Both sound and colour make their effect on the human soul according to the law of harmony; to a fine soul colour appeals, and to a still finer soul sound. Tone has either a warm or a cold effect, according to its element, since all elements are made of different degrees of vibrations. Therefore sound can produce an agreeable or a disagreeable effect upon man's mind and body, and has its healing effect in the absence of herbs and drugs which also have their origin in vibrations.

Manifestation being formed of vibrations, the planets are the primal manifestation, each planet having its special tone; therefore every note represents one planet. Every individual therefore has a note peculiar to himself which is according to his birth planet; for this reason a certain tone appeals to a particular person according to the grade of his evolution. Every element has a sound peculiar to itself; in the finer element the circle of sound expands, and in the grosser element it narrows. It is therefore distinct in the former and indistinct in the latter.

The earth has various aspects of beauty as well as of variety in its sound. Its pitch is on the surface, its form is crescent-like, and its colour is yellow. The sound of earth is dim and dull, and produces a thrill, activity and movement in the body. All instruments of wire and gut, as well as the instruments of percussion, such as the drum, cymbals, etc., represent the sound of the earth.

The sound of water is deep, its form is serpent-like, its colour green, and it is best heard in the roaring of the sea. The sound of running water, of mountain rills, the drizzling and pattering of rain, the sound of water running from a pitcher into a jar, from a pipe into a tub, from a bottle into a glass, all have a smooth and lively effect, and a tendency to produce imagination, fancy, dream, affection, and emotion. The instrument called *jalatarang* is an arrangement of china bowls or glasses graduated in size and filled with water in proportion to the desired scale; more water lowers the tone, and less raises it. These instruments have a touching effect upon the emotions of the heart.

The sound of fire is high-pitched, its form is curled, and its colour red. It is heard in the falling of the thunderbolt and in a volcanic eruption, in the sound of a fire when blazing, in the noise of squibs, crackers, rifles, guns and cannons. All these have a tendency to produce fear.

The sound of air is wavering, its form zigzag, and its colour blue. Its voice is heard in storms, when the wind blows, and in the whisper of the morning breeze. Its effect is breaking, sweeping and piercing. The sound of air finds expression in all wind instruments made of wood, brass, and bamboo; it has a tendency to kindle the fire of the heart, as Rumi writes in his Masnavi about the flute. Krishna is always portrayed in Indian art with a flute. The air sound overpowers all other sounds, for it is living, and in every aspect its influence produces ecstasy.

The sound of ether is self-contained, and it holds all forms and colours. It is the basis of all sounds, and is the undertone which is continuous. Its instrument is the human body, because it can be audible through it; although it is all-pervading, yet it is unheard. It manifests to man as he purifies his body from material properties. The body can become its proper instrument when the space within is opened, when all the tubes and veins in it are free. Then the sound which exists externally in space becomes manifest inwardly also. Ecstasy, illumination, restfulness, fearlessness, rapture, joy and revelation are the effects of this sound. To some it manifests of itself, to others when they are in a negative state caused by weakness of the body or mind; to neither of these is it a benefit, but on the other hand it causes them to become abnormal. This sound only elevates those who open themselves to it by the sacred practices known to the mystics.

The mingled sound of earth and water has a tenderness and delicacy. The sound of earth and fire produces harshness. The sound of earth and air has strength and power. The sound of water and fire has a lively and animating effect. The sound of water with ether has a soothing and comforting effect. The sound of fire and air has a terrifying and fearsome effect. The sound of fire with ether has a breaking and freeing effect. The sound of air with ether produces calm and peace.

CHAPTER II

VIBRATIONS

THE silent life experiences on the surface through activity. The silent life appears as death in comparison with the life of activity on the surface. Only to the wise the life eternal seems preferable on account of the ever-changing and momentary nature of mortal life. The life on the surface seems to be the real life, because it is in this life that all joy is experienced.

In the silent life there is no joy but only peace. The soul's original being is peace and its nature is joy, both of which work against each other. This is the hidden cause of all life's tragedy. The soul originally is without any experience; it experiences all when it opens its eyes to the exterior plane, and keeps them open, enjoying the life on the surface until satisfied. The soul then begins to close its eyes to the exterior plane, and constantly seeks peace, the original state of its being.

The inward and essential part of every being is composed of fine vibrations, and the external part is formed of gross ones. The finer part we call spirit and the grosser matter, the former being less subject to change and destruction and the latter more so. All that lives is spirit and all that dies is matter; and all that dies in spirit is matter and all that lives in matter is spirit. All that is visible and perceptible appears to be living, although subject to death and decay, and is becoming every moment resolved into its finer element; but the sight of man is so deluded by its awareness of the seeming world, that the spirit which really lives is covered under the garb of matter and its true being is hidden. It is the gradually increasing activity which causes vibrations to materialize, and it is the gradual decrease of the same which transmutes them again into spirit. As has been said, vibrations pass through five distinct phases while changing from the fine to the gross; and the elements of ether, air, fire, water and earth each has a savour, colour, and form peculiar to itself. Thus the elements form a wheel which brings them all in time to the surface. At each step in their activity they vary and become distinct from each other; and it is the grouping of these vibrations which causes variety in the objective world. Man calls the law which causes them to disperse destruction.

Vibrations turn to atoms and atoms generate what we call life; thus it happens that their grouping, by the power of nature's affinity, forms a living entity; and as the breath manifests through the form so the body becomes conscious. In one individual there are many fine and small beings hidden; in his blood, in his brain cells, in his skin, and in all planes of his existence. As in the physical being of an individual many small germs are born and nourished which are also living beings, so in his mental plane there are many beings, termed *Muwakkals*, or elementals. These are still finer entities born of man's own thoughts, and as the germs live in his physical body so the elementals dwell in his mental sphere. Man often imagines that thoughts are without life; he does not see that they are more alive than the physical germs and that they have a birth, childhood, youth, age and death. They work for man's advantage or disadvantage according to their nature. The Sufi creates, fashions and controls them. He drills them and rules them throughout his life; they form his army and carry out his desires. As the germs constitute man's physical being and the elementals his mental life, so do the angels constitute his spiritual existence. These are called *Farishtas*.

Vibrations as a rule have length as well as breadth; and they may last the least fraction of a moment or the greater part of the age of the universe. They make different forms, figures, and colours as they shoot forth, one vibration creating another; and thus myriads arise out of one. In this way there are circles beneath circles and circles above circles, all of which form the universe. Every vibration after its manifestation becomes merged again in its original source. The reach of vibrations is according to the fineness of the plane of their starting-point. To speak more plainly, the word uttered by the lips can only reach the ears of the hearer; but the thought proceeding from the mind reaches far, shooting from mind to mind. The vibrations of mind are much stronger than those of words. The earnest feelings of one heart can pierce the heart of another; they speak in the silence, spreading out into the sphere, so that the very atmosphere of a person's presence proclaims his thoughts and emotions. The vibrations of the soul are the most powerful and far-reaching, they run like an electric current from soul to soul.

All things and beings in the universe are connected with each other, visibly or invisibly, and through vibrations a communication is established between them on all the planes of existence; as an ordinary instance, if one person coughs in an assembly, many others begin to do the same, and the same is the case with yawning. This also applies to laughter, excitement and depression. This shows that vibrations convey the conditions of one being to another; therefore the seer knows of the past, present and future, and perceives conditions on all planes of existence.

Vibrations work through the chord of sympathy existing between man and his surroundings and reveal past, present and future conditions; this explains why the howling of dogs foretells death, and the neighing of horses the approach of danger. Not only animals show this but even the plants in times of sorrow begin to die, and the flowers to fade, while during times of happiness they grow and flourish. The reason why plants and animals can perceive the vibrations and know of coming events while man is ignorant of them, is because he has blinded himself with egotism. The influence of vibrations is left on the chair on which one sits, in the bed where one has slept, in the house where one lives, in the clothes one wears, in the food one eats, and even in the street where one walks.

Every emotion arises from the intensity of the vibrations, which when active in different directions produce different emotions, the main cause of every emotion being simply activity. Every vibration while active raises the consciousness to the outermost surface, and the mist caused by this activity collects clouds which we call emotions. The clouds of emotion obscure the clear sight of the soul. Therefore passion is called blind. The excess of the activity of vibrations not only blinds, but weakens the will, and a weak will enfeebles the mind and body.

It is the state of vibrations to which man is tuned that accounts for his soul's note. The different degrees of these notes form a variety of pitch divided by the mystics into three distinct grades. First, the grade which produces power and intelligence, and may be pictured as a calm sea. Secondly, the grade of moderate activity which keeps all things in motion, and is a balance between power and weakness which may be pictured as the sea in motion. Thirdly, the grade of intense activity, which destroys everything and causes all weakness and blindness; it may be pictured as a stormy sea.

In the activity of all things and beings the pitch is recognized by the seer, as a musician knows the key in which any particular music is written. Man's atmosphere tells of the grade of activity of his vibrations.

If vibratory activity is properly controlled, man may experience all life's joy, and at the same time not be enslaved by it. It is most difficult to control activity when it is once started and on the increase, for it is like trying to control a runaway horse. But yet in the control abides the whole of what is called mastership.

The saints and sages spread their peace not only in the place where they sit, but even in the neighbourhood where they dwell; the town or the country where they live is at peace, in accordance with the power of the vibrations they send out from their soul. This is the reason why association with good or bad and with those of the upper or lower classes has a great influence upon the life and character of man. The vibrations of thought and feeling create, procure, and prepare of themselves all the necessary means for their manifestation on the surface. For example a person may desire to eat fish and instead of ordering it might think strongly of it; his thought-vibrations thus speaking to the mental ears of the cook transmit this desire, and perhaps his strong feeling would even attract a fishmonger to the house. In this way the thoughts of sages work out their destiny, according to the strength, power and purity of their minds. A certain degree of thought-power is needed to bring about a certain result, as so much dynamite is required to blast a single rock, and an infinitely greater quantity is necessary to make a tunnel through a mountain.

The length of time that the thought is held has also much to do with its accomplishment, for the thought-vibrations have to be active for a certain time to bring about a certain result. A certain length of time is required for the baking of a cake; if it is hurried the cake will be uncooked; with too great a heat it will burn. If the operator of the mental vibrations lacks patience then the power of thought will be wasted, even if it were half-way to its destiny, or still nearer to a successful issue. If too great a power of thought is given to the accomplishment of a certain thing it destroys while preparing it.

In order to reflect thought and feeling on another, man should observe the same rule as in voice and word. The louder a person speaks in an assembly the more attention he attracts and all those present perforce give him a hearing. In the same way, if a Sufi sends forth the vibrations of his thought and feeling, they naturally strike with a great strength and power on any mind on which they happen to fall. As sweetness of voice has a winning power so it is with tenderness of thought and feeling. Thought-vibrations to which the spoken word is added are doubled in strength; and with a physical effort this strength is trebled. Reason is like fire, it gives light to the thought; but thought overheated loses its power, as heat can weaken the physical body. Reason gives birth to doubt, which destroys the thought-power before it is able to fulfil its destiny.

The strength of thought-power consists in confidence or faith. Reason confuses, and doubts scatter the waves of thought-vibrations, which disperse and go off in different directions from lack of the strength that binds. One should never think or speak against one's desire, for it weakens the thought-vibrations and often brings about contrary results. A variety of thoughts springing up at the same time naturally enfeebles the power of mind, for none of them has a chance to mature, just as twins are often imperfect and triplets seldom live.

The disharmony between one's desire and one's ideal always causes a great confusion in life, for they constantly work against each other. When a person speaks, thinks, or feels either harshly or kindly of another, it reaches the spirit of that one either consciously or unconsciously by the power of vibration. If we happen to be offended with someone and do not show it in speech or action, yet it still cannot be hidden, for the vibrations of our feeling will reach directly to the person in question, and he will begin to feel our displeasure, however far away he may be. The same is the case with our love and pleasure: however we may try to conceal it in speech or action, it cannot be hidden. This explains the old adage that even walls have ears, which really means that even the wall is not impervious to vibrations of thought.

Sufis give special attention to the good and bad wishes of people. They strive continually to attract the good wishes of others whether worthy or unworthy, by every means in their power. Intensity of activity produces strong vibrations named in Sufi terms *Jelal*; gentleness of activity causes mild vibrations called *Jemal*. The former activity works as strength and power, the latter as beauty and grace. The conflict of both these forces is termed *Kemal*, and causes nothing but destruction.

The standard of right and wrong, the conception of good and evil, and the idea of sin and virtue are understood differently by the people of different races, nations, and religions; therefore it is difficult to discern the law governing these opposites. It becomes clear, however, by understanding the law of vibrations. Every thing and being on the surface of existence seem separate from one another, but in every plane beneath the surface they approach nearer to each other, and in the innermost plane they all become one. Every disturbance therefore, caused to the peace of the smallest part of existence on the surface, inwardly affects the whole. Thus any thought, speech or action that disturbs peace is wrong, evil, and a sin; if it brings about peace it is right, good, and a virtue. Life being like a dome, its nature is also dome-like. Disturbance of the slightest part of life disturbs the whole and returns as a curse upon the person who caused it; any peace produced on the surface comforts the whole, and thence returns as peace to the producer.

This is the philosophy of the reward of good deeds and the punishment of bad deeds given by the higher powers.

CHAPTER III

HARMONY

HARMONY is the source of manifestation, the cause of its existence, and the medium between God and man.

The peace for which every soul strives, and which is the true nature of God and the utmost goal of man, is but the outcome of harmony; this shows that all life's attainments without a sense of harmony are but vain. It is the attainment of harmony which is called heaven, and it is the lack of it which is termed hell. The master of it alone understands life, and he who lacks it is foolish in spite of all other knowledge that he may have acquired.

The Sufi gives great importance to the attainment of harmony, believing that light is for angels and darkness for the devil, but that harmony is necessary for a human being in order to keep a balance in life.

There are three aspects of harmony: eternal, universal, and individual.

Eternal harmony is the harmony of consciousness. As it is in itself eternal, all things and beings live and move in it; yet it remains remote, undisturbed and peaceful. This is the God of the believer, and the God of the knower. All vibrations from the finest to the grossest are held together by this harmony, as well as each atom of manifestation, and both creation and destruction take place in order to uphold it. Its power ultimately attracts each being towards the everlasting peace.

Man is drawn in two opposite directions by the power of harmony: towards the Infinite and towards manifestation. He is less conscious of the former than of the latter, and by facing towards one direction he loses sight of the other. The Infinite, being the essential spirit of all, finally attracts all to itself. The Sufi gives the greatest importance to harmony with the Infinite, which he realizes by resignation to the will of God, the Beloved.

The existence of land and water, the land for the water, and the water for the land; the attraction between the heavens and the earth, all demonstrate the universal harmony. The attraction of the sun and moon to each other, the cosmic order of the stars and the planets, all connected and related with each other, moving and working under a certain law; the regular rotation of the seasons, the night following the day, and the day in its turn giving place to the night; the dependence of one being on another; the distinctiveness, attraction and assimilation of the five elements, all prove the universal harmony.

The male and female, beast and bird, vegetable and rock, and all classes of things and beings are linked together and attracted to each other with a chord of harmony. If one being or thing, however apparently useless, were missing in this universe of endless variety, it would be as it were a note missing in a song. As Sa'di says, 'Every being is born for a certain purpose, and the light of that purpose is kindled within his soul.' All famines, plagues, and disasters such as storms, floods, volcanic eruptions, wars and revolutions, however bad they may appear to man, are in reality for the adjusting of this universal harmony.

There is a story told in India of how once all the inhabitants of a village which had suffered from drought, gathered together before the temple of their God, praying that for this year an abundance of rain might fall.

A voice from the unseen replied, 'Whatever We do is for the betterment of Our purpose, ye have no right to interfere with Our work, oh! ye men'. But they again cried for mercy, and continued to do so more persistently. Then came the answer saying, 'Your prayers, fastings, and sacrifices have induced Us to grant for this one year as much rain as ye desire'. They all returned home rejoicing. In the autumn they worked vigorously on their farms, and after having prepared the ground and sown the seed, they prayed for rain. When they considered that sufficient had fallen they again had recourse to prayer, and the rain ceased. In this way an ideal crop of corn was produced and all the inhabitants of that country made merry over it. This year more corn was grown than ever before. After the crops were gathered in however, all those who ate the corn died and many were the victims. In perplexity they again sought the God bowing low before the temple crying, 'Why hast Thou shown such wrath to us, after having shown so great a mercy?' The God replied, 'It was not Our wrath, but your folly for interfering with Our work; We sometimes send a drought, and at other times a flood, so that a portion of your crops may be destroyed, but We have Our reasons for so doing, for in this way all that is poisonous and undesirable in them is also destroyed, leaving only what is beneficial for the preservation of your life.'

The villagers prostrated themselves in humble prayer saying, 'We shall never again try to control the affairs of the universe, Thou art the Creator and Thou art the Controller, we are Thine innocent children, and Thou alone knowest what is best for us.' The Creator knows how to control His world, what to bring forth and what to destroy.

There are two aspects of individual harmony: the harmony between body and soul, and the harmony between individuals.

The soul rejoices in the comforts experienced by the external self, yet man becomes so engrossed in them that the soul's true comfort is neglected. This keeps man dissatisfied through all the momentary comforts he may enjoy, but not understanding this he attributes the cause of his dissatisfaction to some unsatisfied desire in his life. The outlet of all earthly passions gives a momentary satisfaction, yet creates a tendency for more; in this struggle the satisfaction of the soul is overlooked by man who is constantly busied in the pursuit of his earthly enjoyment and comfort, depriving the soul of its true bliss. The true delight of the soul lies in love, harmony, and beauty, the outcome of which is wisdom, calm, and peace; the more constant they are the greater is the satisfaction of the soul.

If man in his daily life would examine every action which has reflected a disagreeable picture of himself upon his soul and caused darkness and dissatisfaction, and if on the other hand he would consciously watch each thought, word, or deed which had produced an inward love, harmony and beauty, and each feeling which had brought him wisdom, calm, and peace, then the way of harmony between soul and body would be easily understood, and both aspects of life would be satisfied, the inner as well as the outer. The soul's satisfaction is much more important than that of the body, for it is more lasting. In this way the thought, speech and action can be adjusted, so that harmony may be established first in the self by the attunement of body and soul.

The next aspect of individual harmony is practised in one's contact with another. Every being has an individual ego produced from his own illusion. This limits his view which is led in the direction of his own interest, and he judges of good and bad, high or low, right or wrong in relation to himself and others, through his limited view, which is generally partial and imaginary rather than true. This darkness is caused by the overshadowing of the soul by the external self. Thus a person becomes blind to his own infirmities as well as to the merits of another, and the right action of another becomes wrong in his eyes and the fault of the self seems right. This is the case with mankind in general, until the veil of darkness is lifted from his eyes.

The *Nafs*, the ego of an individual, causes all disharmony with the self as well as with others, thus showing its unruliness in all aspects of life. The lion, the sovereign among all animals, most powerful and majestic, is always unwelcome to the inhabitants of the forest, and he is even unfriendly to his own kind. Two lions will never greet one another in a friendly way, for their Nafs is so strong; and although the lion is the ruler of all other animals, he is a slave to his own passions which make his life restless. The Nafs of herbivorous animals such as sheep and goats is subdued; for this reason they are harmless to one another and are even harmonious enough to live in herds. The harmony and sympathy existing among them makes them mutually partake of their joys and sorrows; but they easily fall a victim to the wild animals of the forest. The Masters of the past like Moses and Mohammad have always loved to tend their flocks in the wilderness and Jesus Christ spoke of himself as the Good Shepherd, while St. John the Baptist spoke of the Lamb of God, harmless and innocent, ready for sacrifice.

The Nafs of the bird is still milder, therefore upon one tree many and various kinds can live as one family, singing the praise of God in unison, and flying about in flocks of thousands.

Among birds are to be found those who recognize their mate and who live together, harmoniously building the nest for their young, each in turn sitting on the eggs, and bearing their part in the upbringing of their little ones. Many times they mourn and lament over the death of their mate. The Nafs of the insects is still less, they walk over each other without doing any harm, and live together in millions, as one family, without distinction of friend or foe. This proves how the power of Nafs grows at each step in nature's evolution, and culminates in man, creating disharmony all through his life, unless it is subdued, producing thereby a calm and peace within the self, and a sense of harmony with others. Every human being has an attribute peculiar to his Nafs. One is tiger-like, another resembles a dog, while a third may be like a cat and a fourth like a fox. In this way man shows in his speech, thoughts and feelings the beasts and birds, and the condition of his Nafs is akin to their nature, and at times his very appearance resembles them. Therefore his tendency to harmony depends upon the evolution of his Nafs.

As man begins to see clearly through human life, the world begins to appear as a forest to him, filled with wild animals, fighting, killing and preying upon one another.

There are four different classes of men who harmonize with each other in accordance with their different states of evolution: angelic, human, animal, and devilish.

The angelic seeks for heaven, and the human being struggles along in the world; the man with animal propensities revels in his earthly pleasures, while the devilish man is engaged in creating mischief, thereby making a hell for himself and for others. Man after his human evolution becomes angelic, and through his development in animality arrives at the stage of devil.

In music the law of harmony is that the nearest note does not make a consonant interval. This explains the prohibition of marriage between close relatives because of their nearness in quality and blood. As a rule harmony lies in contrast. Men fight with men and women quarrel with women, but the male and the female are as a rule harmonious with each other and a complete oneness makes a perfect harmony. In every being the five elements are constantly working, and in every individual one especially predominates. The wise have therefore distinguished five different natures in man, according to the element predominant in him. Sometimes two elements or even more predominate in a human being in a greater or lesser degree.

The harmony of life can be learnt in the same way as the harmony of music. The ear should be trained to distinguish both tone and word, the meaning concealed within, and to know from the verbal meaning and the tone of voice whether it is a true word or a false note; to distinguish between sarcasm and sincerity, between words spoken in jest and those spoken in earnest; to understand the difference between true admiration and flattery; to distinguish modesty from humility, a smile from a sneer and arrogance from pride, either directly or indirectly expressed. By so doing the ear becomes gradually trained in the same way as in music, and a person knows exactly whether his own tone and word as well as those of another are false or true. Man should learn in what tone to express a certain thought or feeling as in voice cultivation. There are times when he should speak loudly, and there are times when a soft tone of voice is needed; for every word a certain note, and for every speech a certain pitch is necessary. At the same time there should be a proper use of a natural, sharp or flat note, as well as a consideration of key.

There are nine different aspects of feeling, each of which has a certain mode of expression: mirth, expressed in a lively tone; grief, in a pathetic tone; fear, in a broken voice; mercy, in a tender voice; wonder, in an exclamatory tone; courage, in an emphatic tone; frivolity, in a light tone; attachment, in a deep tone; and indifference, in the voice of silence.

An untrained person confuses these. He whispers the words which should be known and speaks out loudly those which should be hidden. A certain subject must be spoken of in a high pitch, while another requires a lower pitch. One should consider the place, the space, the number of persons present, the kind of people and their evolution, and speak in accordance with the understanding of others; as it is said, 'Speak to people in their own language'. With a child one must have childish talk, with the young only suitable words should be spoken, with the old one should speak in accordance with their understanding. In the same way there should be a graduated expression of our thought so that everybody may not be driven with the same whip. It is consideration for others which distinguishes man from the animals.

It must be understood that rhythm is the balance of speech and action. One must speak at the right time, otherwise silence is better than speech. A word of sympathy with the grief of another, and a smile at least when another laughs. One should watch the opportunity for moving a subject in society, and never abruptly change the subject of conversation, but skilfully blend two subjects with a harmonious link. Also one should wait patiently while another speaks, and keep a rein on one's speech when the thought rushes out uncontrollably, in order to keep it in rhythm and under control during its outlet. One should emphasize the important words with a consideration of strong and weak accent. It is necessary to choose the right word and mode of expression, to regulate the speed and to know how to keep the rhythm. Some people begin to speak slowly and gradually increase the speed to such an extent that they are unable to speak coherently. The above applies to all actions in life.

The Sufi, like a student of music, trains both his voice and ear in the harmony of life. The training of the voice consists in being conscientious about each word spoken, about its tone, rhythm, meaning and the appropriateness for the occasion. For instance the words of consolation should be spoken in a slow rhythm, with a soft voice and sympathetic tone. When speaking words of command a lively rhythm is necessary, and a powerful and distinct voice. The Sufi avoids all unrhythmic actions; he keeps the rhythm of his speech under the control of patience, not speaking a word before the right time, not giving an answer until the question is finished. He considers a contradictory word a discord unless spoken in a debate, and even at such times he tries to resolve it into a consonant chord. A contradictory tendency in man finally develops into a passion, until he contradicts even his own idea if it be propounded by another.

In order to keep harmony the Sufi even modulates his speech from one key to another, in other words, he falls in with another person's idea by looking at the subject from the speaker's point of view instead of his own. He makes a base for every conversation with an appropriate introduction, thus preparing the ears of the listener for a perfect response. He watches his every movement and expression, as well as those of others, trying to form a consonant chord of harmony between himself and another.

The attainment of harmony in life takes a longer time to acquire and a more careful study than does the training of the ear and the cultivation of the voice, although it is acquired in the same manner as the knowledge of music. To the ear of the Sufi every word spoken is like a note which is true when harmonious, and false when inharmonious. He makes the scale of his speech either major, minor, or chromatic as occasion demands; and his words either sharp, flat, or natural are in accordance with the law of harmony. For instance, the straight, polite and tactful manner of speech is like his major, minor, or chromatic scale, representing dominance, respect, and equality. Similarly he takes arbitrary or contrary motions to suit the time and situation by following step by step, by agreeing and differing, and even by opposing, and yet keeping up the law of harmony in conversation. Take any two persons as two notes; the harmony existing between them forms intervals either consonant or dissonant, perfect or imperfect, major or minor, diminished or augmented as the two persons may be.

The interval of class, creed, caste, race, nation or religion, as well as the interval of age or state of evolution, or of varied and opposite interests shows the law here distinctly. A wise man would be more likely to be in harmony with his foolish servant than with a semi-wise man who considers himself infallible. Again it is equally possible that a wise man may be far from happy in the society of the foolish, and vice versa. The proud man will always quarrel with the proud while he will support the humble. It is also possible for the proud to agree on a common question of pride, such as pride of race or birth.

Sometimes the interval between the disconnected notes is filled by a middle note forming a consonant chord. For instance the discord between husband and wife may be removed by the link of a child, or the discord between brothers and sisters may be taken away by the intervention of the mother or father. In this way, however inharmonious two persons may be, the forming of a consonant chord by an intervening link creates harmony. A foolish person is an unpliable note whereas an intelligent person is pliable. The former sticks to his ideas, likes, dislikes and convictions, whether right or wrong, while the latter makes them sharp or flat by raising or lowering the tone and pitch, harmonizing with the other as the occasion demands. The key-note is always in harmony with each note, for it has all notes of the scale within it. In the same way the Sufi harmonizes with everybody whether good or bad, wise or foolish, by becoming like the key-note.

All races, nations, classes and people are like a strain of music based upon one chord, where the key-note, the common interest, holds so many personalities in a single bond of harmony. By a study of life the Sufi learns and practises the nature of its harmony. He establishes harmony with the self, with others, with the universe and with the infinite. He identifies himself with another, he sees himself, to to speak, in every other being. He cares for neither blame nor praise, considering both as coming from himself. If a person were to drop a heavy weight and in so doing hurt his own foot, he would not blame his hand for having dropped it, realizing himself in both the hand and the foot. In like manner the Sufi is tolerant when harmed by another, thinking that the harm has come from himself alone. He uses counterpoint by blending the undesirable talk of a friend and making it into a fugue.

He overlooks the faults of others, considering that they know no better. He hides the faults of others, and suppresses any facts that would cause disharmony. His constant fight is with the Nafs, the root of all disharmony and the only enemy of man. By crushing this enemy man gains mastery over himself; this wins for him mastery over the whole universe, because the wall standing between the self and the Almighty has been broken down. Gentleness, mildness, respect, humility, modesty, self-denial, conscientiousness, tolerance and forgiveness are considered by the Sufi as the attributes which produce harmony within one's own soul as well as within that of another. Arrogance, wrath, vice, attachment, greed and jealousy are the six principal sources of disharmony. Nafs, the only creator of disharmony, becomes more powerful the more it is indulged; that is to say the more its desires are gratified, the more it is pleased. For the time being it shows its satisfaction at having gratified its demands, but soon after it demands still more until life becomes a burden. The wise detect this enemy as the instigator of all mischief, but everybody else blames another for his misfortunes in life.

CHAPTER IV

NAME

THE variety of things and beings and the peculiarities which make them differ, cause the necessity of name. Name produces the picture of a form, figure, colour, size, quality, quantity, feeling and sense of things and beings, not only perceptible and comprehensible, but even of those beyond the perception and comprehension; therefore its importance is greater than all things. There is a great secret hidden in a name, be it the name of a person or a thing, and it is formed in relation to the past, present and future conditions of its object; the right horoscope tells you therefore about the conditions of a person.

All mystery is hidden in name. The knowledge of everything rests on first knowing its name, and knowledge is not complete which is devoid of name. Mastery depends upon knowledge; man cannot master a thing of which he has no knowledge. All blessings and benefits derived from earth or heaven are gained by mastery which depends upon knowledge, knowledge depending upon name. Man without the knowledge of the name of a thing is ignorant, and the one who is ignorant is powerless, for man has no hold over anything of which he has no knowledge.

The reason of man's greatness is the scope of the knowledge with which he is gifted, all the mystery of which lies in his recognition of the differences between things and beings. This gives man superiority not only over all creatures of the earth, but it even makes him excel the angels, the hosts of heaven. The Qur'an explains it in the following words, 'When thy Lord said unto the angels, "We are going to place a substitute on earth" they said, "Wilt Thou place there one who will do evil therein and shed blood, while we celebrate Thy praise and sanctify Thee?" God answered, "Verily We know that which ye know not;"

and He taught Adam the names of all things, and then presented them to the angels, and said, "Declare unto Me the names of these things if ye say truth." They answered, "Praise be unto Thee, we have no knowledge but what Thou teachest us, for Thou art all-knowing and wise". God said, "O! Adam, tell them their names". And when Adam came he told their names.'

Every name reveals to the seer the past, present, and the future of that which it covers. Name is not only significant of form but of character as well. The meaning of name plays an important part in man's life, and the sound, the vowels in the name, the rhythm, number, and nature of the letters which compose it, the mystical numbers, symbol and planet, as well as the root from which it is derived and the effect which it produces, all disclose their secret to the seer.

The meaning of a name has a great influence upon its possessor as well as upon others. From the sound of the letters and the word they compose the mystic can understand much about the character and fate of a person. An intelligent person generally gets the idea from the sound of letters that compose a name whether it is beautiful or ugly, soft or hard, consonant or dissonant, but does not know what makes it so; the one who understands knows why it is so.

Letters singly or together are either pronounced smoothly or with difficulty and have their effect accordingly upon oneself and upon another. Names that are smooth and soft-sounding make a soft effect upon the speaker and listener, whereas hard-sounding names have a contrary effect. Man naturally calls soft things by smooth names and hard things by hard-sounding names as for instance flower and rock, wool and flint, etc. Language, and especially name, shows the class of people and character of families, communities and races. Vowels play a great part in the name and its influence. E and I denote Jemal, the feminine qualit yof grace, wisdom, beauty and receptivity, O and U denote Jelal, the masculine quality of power and expression. A denotes Kemal which is significant of the perfection in which both these qualities are centred. The above-named vowels in the composition of the name have an effect according to their place in the name, whether in the beginning, centre or end.

Fate in Sanskrit is called *Karma*, meaning the rhythm of past actions. The influence of rhythm suggested by a name has an effect upon the entity whose name it is as well as upon those who call him by that name. Evenness of rhythm gives balance while unevenness causes a lack of balance. The beauty of rhythm beautifies the character of man.

By rhythm is meant the way in which the name begins and how it ends, whether evenly or unevenly, on the accent or before the accent. The accent falling on the beginning, middle or end varies the effect which plays a part in a person's character and fate. The rhythm of the name suggests the main thing in life, balance or its lack. Lack of balance is a deficiency in character and causes adversity in life. The number of letters plays a great part in the name of a person. An even number shows beauty and wisdom, and an odd number shows love and power.

Number plays a great part in life and especially in name. Each letter of a name has its numerical value; in oriental science it is called *Jafar*. By this system not only are names given to buildings, objects and people, conveying their period of commencement and completion, but the combination of these numbers conveys to the seer its mystical effect.

Names have a psychic effect upon their owners and even upon surroundings. The names of elementals and jinns, the sacred names of God, and the holy names of the prophets and saints, written according to the law of their numerical value, act as a magical charm for the accomplishment of different objects in life; and by the combination of such names written or repeated in their numerical form wonders are performed.

Every letter either singly or when grouped in a word produces a picture which tells its secret to the seer. For instance X makes a cross and O zero, both of which have a meaning. The alphabet used in modern times is a corruption of the original ones, though the old Arabic and Persian writings which are found on arches, walls, hems of garments, on brass vessels and carpets, are of most perfect and beautiful design. A great symbolic significance may be seen in the Chinese, Japanese, Sanskrit and other ancient scripts. Every line, dot and curve has a meaning. The ancients used to write every name not with different letters but as a picture signifying what they wished to express; the picture was divided into different parts and each part was used to represent a certain sound, and in this way the alphabets were made. By this break the true picture was lost, but a certain likeness may still be traced. Even in the present day, although we have a most corrupted form of writing, still from the appearance of a certain name, a person's life, fate or character may be read in whatever language it may be written. For instance a name beginning with I shows a steadfast and righteous ego, uniqueness and love of God and the pursuit of truth. E shows a shy and backward nature and an interest in three directions.

As one letter makes a picture, in the same way a whole word makes a picture. The idea of Allah has come from man and one can read in the form of the hand the word 'Allah'.

The Christian name has a greater influence than the surname. Sometimes a nickname has a still greater effect. The effect of the name is according to its use; the more it is used the greater the effect. Shortened names such as May for Mary, or Bill or Willie for William lessen the effect of the name. The names given by the Holy Ones have a double effect, that of the name itself and that of the will of the one who gave it. Maulabakhsh, the greatest musician in India of his day, was given this name by a faqir who was charmed on hearing his music; it means 'God bless'. After taking this name he had success wherever he went and was blessed with merit and reward, both of which are the rare gifts of God.

There are many instances to be found where a change of name has brought an entire change in a man's life. We read in the Bible that the blessing of Jacob was the name Israel given to him by the angel.

In the Qur'an, Mohammad is constantly addressed by a special name, each name having its effect not only on the life of the Prophet, but on his followers who adopted and worked mystically with any of these names. Sufis have for ages experienced the mystical value of these names. Among Sufis the Murshid gives to his pupils the name 'Talib' or 'Mureed', which is to give him in time the identity of the name.

CHAPTER V

FORM

THE light from which all life comes exists in three aspects, namely, the aspect which manifests as intelligence, the light of the abstract and the light of the sun. The activity of this one light functions in three different aspects. The first is caused by a slow and solemn activity in the eternal consciousness which may be called consciousness or intelligence. It is intelligence when there is nothing before it to be conscious of; when there is something intelligible before it, the same intelligence becomes consciousness. A normal activity in the light of intelligence causes the light of the abstract at the time when the abstract sound turns into light. This light becomes a torch for the seer who is journeying towards the eternal goal. The same light in its intense activity appears as the sun. No person would readily believe that intelligence, abstract light, and the sun are one and the same, yet language does not contradict itself, and all three have always been called by the name of light.

These three aspects of the one light form the idea that lies behind the doctrine of the Trinity, and that of Trimurti which existed thousands of years before Christianity among the Hindus and which denotes the three aspects of the One, the One being three. Substance develops from a ray to an atom, but before this it exists as a vibration. What man sees he accepts as something existent, and what he cannot see does not exist for him. All that man perceives, sees and feels is matter, and that which is the source and cause of all is spirit.

The philosophy of form may be understood by the study of the process by which the unseen life manifests into the seen. As the fine waves of vibrations produce sound, so the gross waves produce light. This is the manner in which the unseen, incomprehensible, and imperceptible life becomes gradually known, by first becoming audible and then visible; and this is the origin and only source of all form.

The sun therefore is the first form seen by the eyes, and it is the origin and source of all forms in the objective world; as such it has been worshipped by the ancients as God, and we can trace the origin of all religions in that mother-religion. We may trace this philosophy in the words of Shams-e Tabrèz, 'When the sun showed his face then appeared the faces and forms of all worlds. His beauty showed their beauty; in his brightness they shone out; so by his rays we saw and knew and named them.'

All the myriad colours in the universe are but the different grades and shades of light, the creator of all elements, which has decorated the heavens so beautifully with sun, moon, planets, and stars; which has made the land and water; with all the beauties of the lower spheres, in some parts dull and in some parts bright, which man has named light and shade. The sun, moon, planets and stars, the brilliance of electricity, the lesser light of gas, lamp, candle, coal and wood, all show the sun reappearing in different forms; the sun is reflected in all things, be they dull pebbles or sparkling diamonds, and their radiance is according to their capability of reflection. This shows that light is the one and only source, and the cause of the whole creation. 'God is the light of the heaven and of the earth', the Qur'an says, and we read in Genesis, 'And God said: let there be light, and there was light'.

All forms on whatever plane they exist, are moulded under the law of affinity. Every atom attracts towards itself the atom of its own element; every positive atom attracts the negative atom of its own element, and the negative attracts the positive; yet each attraction is different and distinct. These atoms group together and make a form. The atoms of the abstract plane group together and make forms of light and colour; these and all different forms of the finer forces of life are seen by the seer. The forms of the mental plane are composed of the atoms of that plane; these are seen by the mind's eye and are called imagination. On the physical plane this process may be seen in a more concrete form.

The mystic sees on the abstract plane one or other element predominating at a certain time, either ether, air, fire, water or earth. Every element in the finer forces of life is rendered intelligible by the direction of its activity and colour; and the various forms of light show its different rates of activity. For instance the feeling of humour develops into greater humour, and sadness into a deeper sorrow, and so it is with the imagination: every pleasant thought develops pleasure and expands into a still pleasanter thought, and every disagreeable imagination grows and becomes more intense. Again, on the physical plane we not only see men dwelling together in cities and villages, but even beasts and birds living in flocks and herds; coal is found in the coal-mine, and gold in the gold-mine; the forest contains thousands of trees, whereas the desert holds not a single one. All this proves the power of affinity which collects and groups the kindred atoms, and makes of them numerous forms, thereby creating an illusion before the eye of man who thus forgets the one source in the manifestation of variety.

The direction taken by every element to make a form depends upon the nature of its activity. For instance, an activity following a horizontal direction shows the earth element, a downward direction the water element, an upward direction the fire element; the activity that moves in a zigzag direction shows the air element, and the form taken by ether is indistinct and misty. Therefore the nature of all things is made plain to the seer by their form and shape, and from their colour their element is known, yellow being the colour of earth, green of water, red of fire, blue of air, and grey of ether. The mingling of these elements produces mixed colours of innumerable shades and tones, and the variety of colour in nature bears evidence of the unlimited life behind it.

Every activity of vibrations produces a certain sound, according to its dome of resonance, and according to the capacity of the mould in which the form is shaped. This explains the idea behind the ancient Hindu word Nada Brahma, which means sound, the Creator God.

By the law of construction and destruction, as well as by addition and reduction, the different forms in this objective world group together and change. A close study of the constant grouping and dispersing of the clouds will reveal many different forms within a few minutes, and this is a key to the same process which can be seen all through nature. The construction and destruction, addition and reduction in forms all take place under the influence of time and space. Each form is shaped and changed subject to this law, for the substance differs according to the length, breadth, depth, height and shape of the mould wherein the form is fashioned and the features are formed according to the impression pressed upon it. It takes time to make a young and tender leaf green, and again to change it from green to red and yellow; and it is space that makes of water either a ditch, well, pond, stream, river or ocean.

The dissimilarity in the features of various races in different periods can be accounted for by the law of time and space, together with climatic and racial causes. The Afghans resemble the natives of the Panjab, and the Singalese the people of Madras; Arabs are similar in feature to the Persians, and the Chinese closely resemble the Japanese; Tibetans resemble the natives of Bhutan, and the Burmese closely resemble the Siamese. All this proves that the proximity of the lands which they inhabit is largely the cause of likeness in feature. As wide as is the distance of space, so wide is the difference in feature among people. The similarity in form of germs, worms and insects is accounted for by the same reason. Twin-born children as a rule resemble each other more closely than other children.

Form depends mostly upon reflection; it is the reflection of the sun in the moon that makes the moon appear round like the sun. All the lower creation evolves by the same law. Animals which begin to resemble man are those which are in his surroundings and see him daily. A man who has the care of animals begins to resemble them, and we see that the butler of a colonel has the bearing of a soldier, and a maid working in a nunnery in time becomes like a nun.

As all things are subject to change, no one thing is the same as it was a moment before, although the change may not be noticeable, for only a definite change is perceptible. In a flower there is the change from bud to blossom, and in a fruit from the unripe to the ripe state.

Even stones change, and some among them have been known to become perceptibly altered even in the course of twenty-four hours.

Time has a great influence upon all things and beings as may be seen by the change from infancy to youth, and from middle age to old age. In Sanskrit, therefore, time is called *Kála* which means destruction, as no change is possible without destruction; in other words destruction may be described as change. All things natural and artificial that we see today differ vastly in their form from what they were several thousand years ago, and not only can this be noticed in such things as fruit, flowers, birds and animals, but also in the human race; for from time to time the structure of man has undergone various changes.

The form of man is divided into two parts, each part having its special attributes. The head is the spiritual body, and the lower part the material body. Therefore, in comparison with the body, the head has far greater importance; thereby one individual is able to recognize another, as the head is the only distinctive part of man. The face is expressive of man's nature and condition of life, also of his past, present and future.

When asked if the face would be burned in the fire of hell, the Prophet answered, 'No, the face will not be burned, for Allah hath said, We have modelled man in Our own image'.

The likeness between things and beings, as well as between beasts and birds, animals and man, can tell us a great deal about the secret of their nature. The sciences of phrenology and physiology were discovered not only by examining the lives of men of various features, but chiefly by studying the similarity that exists between them and animals. For instance a man having the features of a tiger will have a dominant nature, coupled with courage, anger and cruelty. A man with a face resembling a horse is by nature subservient; a man with a face like a dog will have a pugnacious tendency, while a mouse-like face shows timidity.

There are four sources from which the human face and form are derived, and these account for the changes which take place in them. These are: the inherent attributes of his soul; the influence of his heritage; the impressions of his surroundings; and lastly the impression of himself and of his thoughts and deeds, the clothes he wears, the food he eats, the air he breathes, and the way he lives.

In the first of these sources man is helpless for he has no choice; it was not the desire of the tiger to be a tiger, neither did a monkey choose to be a monkey, and it was not the choice of the infant to be born a male or a female. This proves that the first source of man's form depends upon the inherent attributes brought by his soul. Words never can express adequately the wisdom of the Creator who not only fashioned and formed the world, but has given to each being the form suited to his needs. The animals of the cold zones are provided with thick fur as a protection against the cold; to the beasts of the tropics a suitable form is given; the birds of the sea have wings fit for the sea, and those of the earth are provided with wings suitable for the earth. Birds and animals have forms which accord with their habits in life. The form of man proclaims his grade of evolution, his nature, his past and present, as well as his race, nation and surroundings, character and fate.

In the second instance man inherits beauty or its opposite from his ancestors, but in the third and fourth his form depends upon how he builds it. The build of his form depends upon the balance and regularity of his life, and upon the impressions he receives from the world; for in accordance with the attitude he takes towards life, his every thought and action adds or takes away, or removes to another place, the atoms of his body, thus forming the lines and muscles of form and feature. For instance the face of a man speaks his joy, sorrow, pleasure, displeasure, sincerity, insincerity, and all that is developed in him. The muscles of his head tell the phrenologist his condition in life. There is a form in the thought and feelings which produces a beautiful or ugly effect. It is the nature of evolution for all beings, from the lowest to the highest stage of manifestation, to evolve by being connected with a more perfect form. Animals approaching man in their evolution resemble primitive man, and animals in contact with man acquire in their form traces of the likeness of man. This may be understood by a close study of the features of man in the past, and of the improvement which has been made in them.

The nature of creation is that it is progressing always towards beauty. 'God is beautiful, and He loves beauty', says the Qur'an. The nature of the body is to beautify itself; the nature of the mind is to have beautiful thoughts; the longing of the heart is for beautiful feelings. Therefore an infant should grow more beautiful every day, and ignorance seeks to become intelligence. When the progress is in a contrary direction, it shows that the individual has lost the track of natural progress. There are two forms, the natural and the artificial, the latter being a copy of the former.

CHAPTER VI

RHYTHM

MOTION is the significance of life, and the law of motion is rhythm. Rhythm is life disguised in motion, and in every guise it seems to attract the attention of man; from a child who is pleased with the moving of a rattle and is soothed by the swing of its cradle, to a grown person whose every game, sport and enjoyment has rhythm disguised in it in some way or another, whether it is a game of tennis, cricket or golf, as well as boxing and wrestling. Again, in the intellectual recreations of man, both poetry and music, vocal or instrumental, have rhythm as their very spirit and life. There is a saying in Sanskrit that tone is the mother of nature, but that rhythm is its father. An infant once given the habit of a regular time for his food demands it at that time, although he has no idea of time. This is accounted for by the fact that the very nature of life is rhythm. The infant begins his life on earth by moving its arms and legs, thus showing the rhythm of its nature, and illustrating the philosophy which teaches that rhythm is the sign of life. The inclination to dance shown by every man illustrates also that innate nature of beauty which chooses rhythm for its expression.

Rhythm produces an ecstasy which is inexplicable, and incomparable with any other source of intoxication. This is why the dance has been the most fascinating pastime of all people, both civilized and savage, and has delighted alike saint and sinner. The races which show a tendency for strongly accentuated rhythm must be vigorous by nature. Jazz has come from the negroes, and the syncopation is the secret of its charm and is the natural expression of their racial rhythm. Its rhythm arouses a kind of life among performers and audience alike, and it is the love of this life that has given such popularity to jazz. The dances among many wild tribes in different parts of the world show a most pronounced rhythm, which proves that rhythm is not a culture, but is natural. Among Europeans, the Spanish, Poles, Hungarians and Russians show the greatest tendency toward rhythm.

The secret of the success of the Russian ballet and the Spanish dance lies in their exquisite rhythm. Among the Asiatic races the music of the Mongolians is chiefly based on rhythm, it being more pronounced than melody in their music. In Turkish and Persian music rhythm is also pronounced, and among the Arabs the variety of rhythms is very vast. In India however the culture of rhythm has reached perfection. An expert musician in India improvises a melody, keeping the same time throughout the whole improvisation. In order to become a master musician in India, one must master thoroughly not only *raga*, the scale, but also *tala*, the rhythm. Indians as a race are naturally inclined to rhythm; their dance *Tandeva Nrūtya*, the dance of the South, is an expression of rhythm through movement.

In the Hindu science of music there are five different rhythms which are generally derived from the study of nature:

1. Chatura, the rhythm of four beats, which was invented by Devas or divine men.
2. Tisra, the rhythm of three beats, invented by Rishis or saints.
3. Khanda, the rhythm of five beats, invented by the Rakshasas.
4. Misra, the rhythm of seven beats, invented by the people.
5. Sankrian, the rhythm of nine beats, invented by the commercial class.

Mahadeva, the great Lord of the Yogis, was the dancer of *Tandeva Nrūtya* and his consort Parvati danced the *Lassia Nrūtya*.

The traditions of the Hindus have as a most sacred record the mystical legend of Shri Krishna dancing with the Gōpis. The story relates how Krishna, the charming youthful Lord of the Hindus, was moving among the dwellings of the cowherds, and every maiden attracted by his beauty and charm asked him to dance with her. He promised every maiden that asked him that he would dance with her on the night of the full moon. On the night of the full moon there assembled sixteen hundred Gōpis, and the miracle of Krishna was performed when he appeared as a separate Krishna to each Gōpi and all of them danced with their beloved Lord at one and the same time.

There is a tradition in Islam, where music, dancing and all amusements and light occupations are strictly prohibited, that on one occasion, it being a holiday, the Prophet called his wife Ayesha to look at the dance and listen to the music of some street musicians. In the meantime his great Khalif happened to come by and was shocked at seeing the Prophet who had prohibited such things himself permitting music in front of his house. When he stopped the music of the street players, pointing out to them that it was the house of the Prophet, Mohammad requested that they might continue, saying that it was a holiday and that there is no heart that does not move with the motion of rhythm.

In the traditions of the Sufis *Raqs*, the sacred dance of spiritual ecstasy which even now is prevalent among the Sufis of the East, is traced to the time when contemplation of the Creator impressed the wonderful reality of his vision so deeply on the heart of Jelal-ud-Din Rumi that he became entirely absorbed in the whole and single immanence of nature, and took a rhythmic turn which caused the skirt of his garment to form a circle, and the movements of his hands and neck made a circle; and it is the memory of this moment of vision which is celebrated in the dance of dervishes. Even in the lower creation, among beasts and birds, their joy is always expressed in dance; a bird like the peacock, when conscious of his beauty and of the beauty of the forest around him, expresses his joy in dance. Dance arouses passion and emotion in all living creatures.

In the East, and especially in India where the life of the people for centuries has been based on psychological principles, in the royal processions or at Durbars an impression of kingly grandeur is made upon the minds of people by the beating of drums; and the same beating of drums takes place at wedding ceremonies and at the services in the temples.

Sufis, in order to awaken in man that part of his emotional nature which is generally asleep, have a rhythmic practice which sets the whole mechanism of body and mind in rhythm. There exists in all people, either consciously or unconsciously, a tendency toward rhythm. Among European nations the expression of pleasure is shown by the clapping of the hands; a farewell sign is made by the waving of the hand which makes rhythm.

All labour and toil, however hard and difficult, is made easy by the power of rhythm in some way or other. This idea opens to the thinker a means for a still deeper study of life.

Rhythm in every guise, be it called game, play, amusement, poetry, music or dance, is the very nature of man's whole constitution. When the entire mechanism of his body is working in a rhythm, the beat of the pulse, of the heart, of the head, the circulation of the blood, hunger and thirst, all show rhythm, and it is the breaking of rhythm that is called disease. When the child is crying and the mother does not know what ails it, she holds it in her arms and pats it on the back. This sets the circulation of the blood, the pulsations and the whole mechanism of the body in rhythm; in other words sets the body in order, and soothes the child. The nursery rhyme 'Pat-a-cake', which is known all the world over in some form or other, cures a child of fretfulness by setting its whole being in rhythm.

Therefore physicians depend more upon the examination of the pulse than on anything else in discovering the true nature of disease, together with the examination of the beat of the heart and the movement of the lungs in the chest and back.

Rhythm plays a most important part not only in the body, but in the mind also; the change from joy to sorrow, the rising and fall of thoughts, and the whole working of the mind show rhythm, and all confusion and despair seem to be accounted for by the lack of rhythm in mind.

In ancient times healers in the East, and especially those in India, when healing a patient of any complaint of a psychological character, known either as an obsession or an effect of magic, excited the emotional nature of the patient by the emphatic rhythm of their drum and song, at the same time making the patient swing his head up and down in time to the music. This aroused his emotions and prompted him to tell the secret of his complaint which hitherto had been hidden under the cover of fear, convention, and forms of society. The patient confessed everything to the healer under the spell produced by the rhythm, and the healer was enabled to discover the source of the malady.

The words 'thoughtful' and 'thoughtless' signify a rhythmic or unrhythmic state of the mind; and balance, which is the only upholding power in life, is kept by rhythm. Respiration, which keeps mind and body connected and which links the mind and soul, consists in keeping rhythm every moment when awake or asleep; inhaling and exhaling may be likened to the moving and swinging of the pendulum of a clock. As all strength and energy is maintained by breath, and as breath is the sign of life, and its nature is to flow alternately on the right and left side, all this proves rhythm to be of the greatest significance in life.

As rhythm is innate in man and maintains his health, so upon rhythm depend all a man's affairs in life; his success, his failure, his right acts and his wrong acts, all are accounted for in some way or other by a change of rhythm. The instinct of flying in the bird is a rhythmic movement of the wings; and it is the same tendency of rhythmic contraction which makes the fish swim and the snake glide.

A keen observation shows that the whole universe is a single mechanism working by the law of rhythm; the rise and fall of the waves, the ebb and flow of the tide, the waxing and waning of the moon, the sunrise and the sunset, the change of the seasons, the moving of the earth and of the planets, the whole cosmic system and the constitution of the entire universe are working under the law of rhythm. Cycles of rhythm, with major and minor cycles interpenetrating, uphold the whole creation in their swing. This demonstrates the origin of manifestation: that motion has sprung from the motionless life, and that every motion must necessarily result in a dual aspect. As soon as you move a stick, the single movement will make two points, the one where it starts and the other where it ends, the one strong and the other weak; to these a music conductor will count '*one*, two,' '*one*, two,' a strong accent and a weak accent: one motion with two effects, each distinct and different from the other. It is this mystery that lies hidden under the dual aspect of all phases and forms of life; and the reason, cause, and significance of all life is found in rhythm.

There is a psychological conception of rhythms used in poetry or music which may be explained thus: every rhythm has a certain effect, not only upon the physical and mental bodies of the poet, on him for whom the poetry is written, on the musician, or on him to whom the song is sung, but even upon their life's affairs. The belief is that it can bring good or bad luck to the poet and musician or to the one who listens. The idea is that rhythm is hidden under the root of every activity, constructive or destructive, so that on the rhythm of every activity the fate of the affair depends. Expressions used in everyday speech such as, 'he was too late', or, 'it was done too soon', or 'that was done in time', all show the influence of rhythm upon the affair. Events such as the sinking of the Titanic, and the amazing changes that took place during the late war, if keenly studied can be accounted for by rhythm working in both mental and physical spheres.

There is a superstition among Indians that when somebody yawns, someone else who is present must either snap his fingers or clap his hands. The hidden meaning of this is that a yawn is significant of the slowing down of the rhythm, and that by clicking the fingers or clapping the hands one is supposed to bring the rhythm back to its original state. A Muslim child when reading the Qur'an moves his head backwards and forwards; this is popularly supposed to be a respectful bow to the sacred words that he reads; but psychologically speaking it helps him to memorize the Qur'an by regulating the circulation and making the brain a receptive vehicle, as when filling a bottle one sometimes shakes it in order to make more room. This also may be seen when a person nods the head in accepting an idea or shakes it when he cannot take it in.

The mechanism of every kind of machinery that works by itself is arranged and kept going by the law of rhythm; and this is another proof of the fact that the whole mechanism of the universe is based on the law of rhythm.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC

WHEN we pay attention to nature's music, we find that every thing on the earth contributes to its harmony. The trees joyously wave their branches in rhythm with the wind; the sound of the sea, the murmuring of the breeze, the whistling of the wind through rocks, hills, and mountains; the flash of the lightning, and the crash of the thunder, the harmony of the sun and moon, the movements of the stars and planets, the blooming of the flower, the fading of the leaf, the regular alternation of morning, evening, noon, and night, all reveal to the seer the music of nature.

The insects have their concerts and ballets, and the choirs of birds chant in unison their hymns of praise. Dogs and cats have their orgies, foxes and wolves have their soirées musicales in the forest, while tigers and lions hold their operas in the wilderness. Music is the only means of understanding among birds and beasts. This may be seen by the gradation of pitch and the volume of tone, the manner of tune, the number of repetitions, and the duration of their various sounds; these convey to their fellow-creatures the time for joining the flock, the warning of coming danger, the declaration of war, the feeling of love, and the sense of sympathy, displeasure, passion, anger, fear, and jealousy, making a language of itself.

In man breath is a constant tone, and the beat of the heart, pulse, and head keeps the rhythm continuously. An infant responds to music before it has learnt how to speak; it moves its hands and feet in time, and expresses its pleasure and pain in different tones.

In the beginning of human creation, no language such as we now have existed, but only music. Man first expressed his thoughts and feelings by low and high, short and prolonged sounds. The depth of his tone showed his strength and power, and the height of his pitch expressed love and wisdom. Man conveyed his sincerity, insincerity, inclination, disinclination, pleasure or displeasure by the variety of his musical expressions.

The tongue touching various points in the mouth, and the opening and the closing of the lips in different ways, produced the variety of sounds. The grouping of the sounds made words conveying different meanings in their various modes of expression. This gradually transformed music into a language, but language could never free itself from music.

A word spoken in a certain tone shows subservience, and the same word spoken in a different tone expresses command; a word spoken in a certain pitch shows kindness, and the same word spoken in a different pitch expresses coldness. Words spoken in a certain rhythm show willingness, and the same words express unwillingness when spoken at a different degree of speed. Up to the present day the ancient languages Sanskrit, Arabic and Hebrew cannot be mastered by simply learning the words, pronunciation and grammar, because a particular rhythmic and tonal expression is needed. The word in itself is frequently insufficient to express the meaning clearly. The student of language by keen study can discover this. Even modern languages are but a simplification of music. No words of any language can be spoken in one and the same way without the distinction of tone, pitch, rhythm, accent, pause and rest. A language however simple cannot exist without music in it; music gives it a concrete expression. For this reason a foreign language is rarely spoken perfectly; the words are learnt, but the music is not mastered.

Language may be called the simplification of music; music is hidden within it as the soul is hidden in the body; at each step toward simplification the language has lost some of its music. A study of ancient traditions reveals that the first divine messages were given in song, as were the Psalms of David, the Song of Solomon, the Gathas of Zoroaster and the Gita of Krishna.

When language became more complex, it closed as it were one wing, the sense of tone; keeping the other wing, the sense of rhythm, outspread. This made poetry a subject distinct and separate from music. In ancient times religions, philosophies, sciences and arts were expressed in poetry. Parts of the Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabaharata, Zendavesta, Kabala, and Bible are to be found in verse, as well as different arts and sciences in the ancient languages. Among the scriptures only the Qur'an is entirely in prose, and even this is not devoid of poetry. In the East, even in recent times, not only manuscripts of science, art, and literature were written in poetry, but the learned even discoursed in verse. In the next stage, man freed the language from the bond of rhythm and made prose out of poetry. Although man has tried to free language from the trammels of tone and rhythm, yet in spite of this the spirit of music still exists. Man prefers to hear poetry recited and prose well read, which is in itself a proof of the soul seeking music even in the spoken word.

The crooning song of the mother soothes the infant and makes it sleep, and lively music gives it an inclination to dance. It is music which doubles the courage and strength of a soldier when marching towards the field of battle. In the East, when the caravans travel from place to place on a pilgrimage, they sing as they go. In India the coolies sing when at work, and the rhythm of the music makes the hardest labour become easy for them.

An ancient legend tells how the angels sang at the command of God to induce the unwilling soul to enter the body of Adam. The soul, intoxicated by the song of the angels, entered the body which is regarded as a prison.

All spiritualists who have really sounded the depths of spiritualism have realized that there is no better means of attracting the spirits from their plane of freedom to the outer plane than by music. They make use of different instruments which appeal to certain spirits, and sing songs that have a special effect upon the particular spirit with whom they wish to communicate. There is no magic like music for making an effect upon the human soul.

The taste for music is inborn in man, and it first shows in the infant. Music is known to a child from its cradle, but as it grows in this world of delusion its mind becomes absorbed in so many and various objects, that it loses the aptitude for music which its soul possessed. When grown-up man enjoys and appreciates music in accordance with his grade of evolution, and with the surroundings in which he has been born and brought up; the man of the wilderness sings his wild lays, and the man of the city his popular song. The more refined man becomes, the finer the music he enjoys. The character in every man creates a tendency for music akin to it; in other words the gay man enjoys light music, while the serious-minded person prefers classical; the intellectual man takes delight in technique, while the simpleton is satisfied with his drum.

There are five different aspects of the art of music: popular, that which induces motion of the body; technical, that which satisfies the intellect; artistic, that which has beauty and grace; appealing, that which pierces the heart; uplifting, that in which the soul hears the music of the spheres.

The effect of music depends not only on the proficiency, but also upon the evolution of the performer. Its effect upon the listener is in accordance with his knowledge and evolution; for this reason the value of music differs with each individual. For a self-satisfied person there is no chance of progress, because he clings contentedly to his taste according to his state of evolution, refusing to advance a step higher than his present level. He who gradually progresses along the path of music, in the end attains to the highest perfection. No other art can inspire and sweeten the personality like music; the lover of music attains sooner or later to the most sublime field of thought.

India has preserved the mysticism of tone and pitch discovered by the ancients, and its music itself signifies this.

The Indian music is based upon the principle of the raga which shows it to be akin to nature. It has avoided limitations of technique by adopting a purely inspirational method.

The ragas are derived from five different sources: the mathematical law of variety, the inspiration of the mystics, the imagination of the musicians, the natural lays peculiar to the people residing in different parts of the land, and the idealization of the poets; these made a world of ragas, calling one *rag*, the male, another *ragini*, the female, and others *putra*, sons, and *bharja*, daughters-in-law.

Raga is called the male theme because of its creative and positive nature; ragini is called the female theme on account of its responsive and fine quality. Putras are such themes as are derived from the mingling of ragas and raginis; in them can be found a likeness to the raga and the ragini from which they are derived. Bharja is the theme which responds to the putra. There are six ragas and thirty-six raginis, six belonging to each raga; and forty-eight putras and forty-eight bharjas which constitute this family.

Each raga has an administration of its own, including a chief, Mukhya, the key-note; Wadi, a king, a principal note; Samwadi a minister, a subordinate note; Anuwadi, a servant, an assonant note; Viwadi, an enemy, a dissonant note. This gives to the student of the raga a clear conception of its use. Each raga has its image distinct from the other. This shows the highest reach of imagination.

The poets have depicted the images of ragas just as the picture of each aspect of life is clear in the imagination of the intelligent. The ancient gods and goddesses were simply images of the different aspects of life, and in order to teach the worship of the immanence of God in nature these various images were placed in the temples, in order that God in His every aspect of manifestation might be worshipped. The same idea has been worked out in the images of ragas, which create with delicate imagination the type, form, figure, action, expression and effect of the idea.

Every hour of the day and night, every day, week, month and season has its influence upon man's physical and mental condition. In the same way each raga has power upon the atmosphere, as well as upon the health and mind of man; the same effect as that shown by the different times in life, subject to the cosmic law. By the knowledge of both time and raga the wise have connected them to suit each other.

There are instances in ancient tradition when birds and animals were charmed by the flute of Krishna, rocks were melted by the song of Orpheus; and the Dipak Raga sung by Tansen lighted all the torches, while he himself was burnt by reason of the inner fire his song produced. Even today the snakes are charmed by the Pungi[1] of the snake-charmers in India. All this shows us how the ancients must have dived into the most mysterious ocean of music.

The secret of composition lies in sustaining the tone as solidly and as long as possible through all its different degrees; a break destroys its life, grace, power and magnetism, just as the breath holds life, and has all grace, power and magnetism. There are some notes that need a longer life than others, according to their character and purpose.

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[1] A special kind of flute.

In a true composition a miniature of nature's music is seen. The effects of thunder, rain, and storm, and the pictures of hills and rivers make music a real art. Although art is an improvisation on nature, yet it is only genuine when it keeps close to nature. The music which expresses the nature and character of individuals, nations or races is still higher. The highest and most ideal form of composition is that which expresses life, character, emotions and feelings, for this is the inner world which is only seen by the eye of mind. A genius uses music as a language to express fully, without the help of words, whatever he may wish to make known; for music, a perfect and universal language, can express feeling more comprehensively than any tongue.

Music loses its freedom by being subject to the laws of technique, but mystics in their sacred music, regardless of the world's opinion, free both their composition and improvisations from the limitations of technicality.

The art of music in the East is called *Kalá*, and has three aspects: vocal, instrumental, and expressing movement.

Vocal music is considered to be the highest, for it is natural; the effect produced by an instrument which is merely a machine cannot be compared with that of the human voice. However perfect strings may be, they cannot make the same impression on the listener as the voice which comes direct from the soul as breath, and has been brought to the surface through the medium of the mind and the vocal organs of the body. When the soul desires to express itself in the voice, it first causes an activity in the mind; and the mind by means of thought projects finer vibrations in the mental plane; these in due course develop and run as breath through the regions of the abdomen, lungs, mouth, throat, and nasal organs, causing the air to vibrate all through, until they manifest on the surface as voice. The voice therefore naturally expresses the attitude of mind whether true or false, sincere or insincere.

The voice has all the magnetism which an instrument lacks; for voice is nature's ideal instrument, upon which all other nstruments of the world are modelled.

The effect produced by singing depends upon the depth of feeling of the singer. The voice of a sympathetic singer is quite different from that of one who is heartless. However artificially cultivated a voice may be, it will never produce feeling, grace and beauty unless the heart be cultivated also. Singing has a twofold source of interest, the grace of music and the beauty of poetry. In proportion as the singer feels the words he sings, an effect is produced upon the listeners; his heart, so to speak, accompanies the song.

Although the sound produced by an instrument cannot be produced by the voice, yet the instrument is absolutely dependent upon man. This explains clearly how the soul makes use of the mind, and how the mind rules the body; yet it seems as though the body works, not the mind, and the soul is left out. When man hears the sound of the instrument and sees the hand of the player at work, he does not see the mind working behind, nor the phenomenon of the soul.

At each step from the inner being to the surface there is an apparent improvement, which appears to be more positive; yet every step towards the surface entails limitation and dependence.

There is nothing which is unable to serve as a medium for sound, although tone manifests more clearly through a sonorous body than through a solid one, the former being open to vibrations while the latter is closed. All things which give a clear sound show life, while solid bodies choked up with substance seem dead. Resonance is the preserving of tone, in other words it is the rebound of tone which produces an echo. On this principle all instruments are made, the difference lying in the quality and quantity of the tone, which depend upon the construction of the instrument. The instruments of percussion such as the *tabla*, or the drum, are suitable for practical music, and stringed instruments like the *sitar*, violin or harp are meant for artistic music. The *vina* is especially constructed to concentrate the vibrations; as it gives a faint sound, sometimes only audible to the player, it is used in meditation.

The effect of instrumental music also depends upon the evolution of man who expresses with the tips of his fingers upon the instrument his grade of evolution; in other words his soul speaks through the instrument. Man's state of mind can be read by his touch upon any instrument; for however great an expert he may be, he cannot produce by mere skill, without a developed feeling within himself, the grace and beauty which appeal to the heart.

Wind instruments, like the flute and the *algosa*, especially express the heart quality, for they are played with the breath which is the very life; therefore they kindle the heart's fire.

Instruments stringed with gut have a living effect, for they come from a living creature which once had a heart; those stringed with wire have a thrilling effect; and the instruments of percussion such as the drum have a stimulating and animating effect upon man.

After vocal and instrumental music comes the motional music of the dance. Motion is the nature of vibration. Every motion contains within itself a thought and feeling. This art is innate in man; an infant's first pleasure in life is to amuse himself with the movement of hands and feet; a child on hearing music begins to move. Even beasts and birds express their joy in motion. The peacock proud in the vision of his beauty displays his vanity in dance; likewise the cobra unfolds his hood and rocks his body on hearing the music of the pungi. All this proves that motion is the sign of life, and when accompanied with music it sets both the performer and onlooker in motion.

The mystics have always looked upon this subject as a sacred art. In the Hebrew scriptures we find David dancing before the Lord; and the gods and goddesses of the Greeks, Egyptians, Buddhists, and Brahmans are represented in different poses, all having a certain meaning and philosophy, relating to the great cosmic dance which is evolution.

Even up to the present time among Sufis in the East dancing takes place at their sacred meetings called Suma, for dancing is the outcome of joy; the dervishes at the Suma give an outlet to their ecstasy in *Raqs* which is regarded with great respect and reverence by those present, and is in itself a sacred ceremony.

The art of dancing has greatly degenerated owing to its misuse.

People for the most part dance either for the sake of amusement or exercise, often abusing the art in their frivolity.

Tune and rhythm tend to produce an inclination for dance. To sum up, dancing may be said to be a graceful expression of thought and feeling without uttering a word. It may be used also to impress the soul by movement, by producing an ideal picture before it. When beauty of movement is taken as the presentment of the divine ideal, then the dance becomes sacred.

The music of life shows its melody and harmony in our daily experiences. Every spoken word is either a true or a false note, according to the scale of our ideal. The tone of one personality is hard like a horn; while the tone of another is soft like the high notes of a flute.

The gradual progress of all creation from a lower to a higher evolution, its change from one aspect to another, is shown as in music where a melody is transposed from one key into another. The friendship and enmity among men, and their likes and dislikes, are as chords and discords. The harmony of human nature, and the human tendency to attraction and repulsion, are like the effect of the consonant and dissonant intervals in music.

In tenderness of heart the tone turns into a half-tone; and with the breaking of the heart the tone breaks into microtones. The more tender the heart becomes, the fuller the tone becomes; the harder the heart grows, the more dead it sounds.

Each note, each scale, and each strain expires at the appointed time; and at the end of the soul's experience here the finale comes; but the impression remains, as a concert in a dream, before the radiant vision of the consciousness.

With the music of the Absolute the bass, the undertone, is going on continuously; but on the surface beneath the various keys of all the instruments of nature's music, the undertone is hidden and subdued. Every being with life comes to the surface and again returns whence it came, as each note has its return to the ocean of sound. The undertone of this existence is the loudest and the softest, the highest and the lowest; it overwhelms all instruments of soft or loud, high or low tone, until all gradually merge in it; this undertone always is, and always will be.

The mystery of sound is mysticism; the harmony of life is religion. The knowledge of vibrations is metaphysics, and the analysis of atoms science; and their harmonious grouping is art. The rhythm of form is poetry, and the rhythm of sound is music. This shows that music is the art of arts and the science of all sciences; and it contains the fountain of all knowledge within itself.

Music is called a divine or celestial art, not only because of its use in religion and devotion, and because it is in itself a universal religion, but because of its fineness in comparison with all other arts and sciences. Every sacred scripture, holy picture or spoken word, produces the impression of its identity upon the mirror of the soul; but music stands before the soul without producing any impression of this objective world, in either name or form, thus preparing the soul to realize the Infinite.

Recognizing this, the Sufi names music *Giza-i Ruh*, the food of the soul, and uses it as a source of spiritual perfection; for music fans the fire of the heart, and the flame arising from it illumines the soul. The Sufi derives much more benefit from music in his meditations than from anything else. His devotional and meditative attitude makes him responsive to music, which helps him in his spiritual unfoldment. The consciousness, by the help of music, first frees itself from the body and then from the mind. This once accomplished, only one step more is needed to attain spiritual perfection.

Sufis in all ages have taken a keen interest in music, in whatever land they may have dwelt; Rumi especially adopted this art by reason of his great devotion. He listened to the verses of the mystics on love and truth, sung by the Qawwals, the musicians, to the accompaniment of the flute.

The Sufi visualizes the object of his devotion in his mind, which is reflected upon the mirror of his soul. The heart, the factor of feeling, is possessed by everyone, although with everyone it is not a living heart. This heart is made alive by the Sufi who gives an outlet to his intense feelings in tears and in sighs. By so doing the clouds of Jelal, the power which gathers with his psychic development, fall in tears as drops of rain; and the sky of his heart is clear, allowing the soul to shine. This condition is regarded by Sufis as the sacred ecstasy.

Since the time of Rumi music has become a part of the devotions in the Mevlevi Order of the Sufis. The masses in general, owing to their narrow orthodox views, have cast out the Sufis, and opposed them for their freedom of thought; thus misinterpreting the Prophet's teaching, which prohibited the abuse of music, not music in the real sense of the word. For this reason a language of music was made by Sufis, so that only the initiated could understand the meaning of the songs. Many in the East hear and enjoy these songs not understanding what they really mean.

A branch of this order came to India in ancient times, and was known as the Chishtia school of Sufis; it was brought to great glory by Khwaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti, one of the greatest mystics ever known to the world. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he actually lived on music; and even at the present time, although his body has been in the tomb at Ajmer for many centuries, yet at his shrine there is always music given by the best singers and musicians in the land. This shows the glory of a poverty-stricken sage, compared with the poverty of a glorious king; the one during his life had all things, which ceased at his death, while the glory of the sage is ever-increasing. At the present time music is prevalent in the school of the Chishtis who hold meditative musical assemblies called Suma or Qawwali. During these they meditate on the ideal of their devotion, which is in accordance with their grade of evolution, and they increase the fire of their devotion while listening to the music.

Wajad, the sacred ecstasy which the Sufis experience at Suma, may be said to be union with the Desired One. There are three aspects of this union which are experienced by Sufis of different stages of evolution. The first is the union with the revered ideal from that plane of earth present before the devotee, either the objective plane or the plane of thought. The heart of the devotee, filled with love, admiration and gratitude then becomes capable of visualizing the form of his ideal of devotion whilst listening to the music.

The second step in ecstasy, and the higher aspect of union, is union with the beauty of character of the ideal, irrespective of form. The song in praise of the ideal character helps the love of the devotee to gush forth and overflow.

The third stage in ecstasy is union with the divine Beloved, the highest ideal, who is beyond the limitation of name and form, virtue or merit; with whom it has constantly sought union, and whom the soul has finally found. This joy is unexplainable. When the words of those souls who have already attained union with the divine Beloved are sung before the one who is treading the path of divine love, he sees all the signs on the path described in those verses, and it is a great comfort to him. The praise of the One so idealized, so unlike the ideal of the world in general, fills him with joy beyond words.

Ecstasy manifests in various aspects. Sometimes a Sufi may be in tears, sometimes he will sigh, sometimes it expresses itself in Rakhs, motion. All this is regarded with respect and reverence by those present at the Suma assembly, as ecstasy is considered to be divine bliss. The sighing of the devotee clears a path for him into the world unseen, and his tears wash away the sins of ages. All revelation follows the ecstasy; all knowledge that a book can never contain, that a language can never express, nor a teacher teach, comes to him of itself.

CHAPTER VIII

ABSTRACT SOUND

ABSTRACT sound is called Saut-e Sarmad by the Sufis; all space is filled with it. The vibrations of this sound are too fine to be either audible or visible to the material ears or eyes, since it is even difficult for the eyes to see the form and colour of the ethereal vibrations on the external plane. It was the Saut-e Sarmad, the sound of the abstract plane, which Mohammad heard in the cave of Ghar-e Hirá when he became lost in his divine ideal. The Qur'an refers to this sound in the words, 'Be! and all became.' Moses heard this very sound on Mount Sinai, when in communion with God; and the same word was audible to Christ when absorbed in his Heavenly Father in the wilderness. Shiva heard the same Anahad Nada during his Samadhi in the cave of the Himalayas.

The flute of Krishna is symbolic of the same sound. This sound is the source of all revelation to the Masters, to whom it is revealed from within; it is because of this that they know and teach one and the same truth.

The Sufi knows of the past, present and future, and about all things in life, by being able to know the direction of sound. Every aspect of one's being in which sound manifests has a peculiar effect upon life, for the activity of vibrations has a special effect in every direction. The knower of the mystery of sound knows the mystery of the whole universe. Whoever has followed the strains of this sound has forgotten all earthly distinctions and differences, and has reached that goal of truth in which all the Blessed Ones of God unite. Space is within the body as well as around it; in other words the body is in the space and the space is in the body.

This being the case, the sound of the abstract is always going on within, around and about man. Man does not hear it as a rule, because his consciousness is entirely centred in his material existence. Man becomes so absorbed in his experiences in the external world through the medium of the physical body that space, with all its wonders of light and sound, appears to him blank.

This can be easily understood by studying the nature of colour. There are many colours that are quite distinct by themselves, yet when mixed with others of still brighter hue they become altogether eclipsed; even bright colours embroidered with gold, silver, diamonds or pearls serve merely as a background to the dazzling embroidery. So it is with the abstract sound compared with the sounds of the external world. The limited volume of earthly sounds is so concrete that it dims the effect of the sound of the abstract to the sense of hearing, although in comparison to it the sounds of the earth are like that of a whistle to a drum. When the abstract sound is audible all other sounds become indistinct to the mystic.

The sound of the abstract is called Anahad in the Vedas, meaning unlimited sound. The Sufis name it Sarmad, which suggests the idea of intoxication. The word intoxication is here used to signify upliftment, the freedom of the soul from its earthly bondage. Those who are able to hear the Saut-e Sarmad and meditate on it are relieved from all worries, anxieties, sorrows, fears and diseases; and the soul is freed from captivity in the senses and in the physical body. The soul of the listener becomes the all-pervading consciousness, and his spirit becomes the battery which keeps the whole universe in motion.

Some train themselves to hear the Saut-e Sarmad in the solitude on the sea shore, on the river bank, and in the hills and dales; others attain it while sitting in the caves of the mountains, or when wandering constantly through forests and deserts, keeping themselves in the wilderness apart from the haunts of men. Yogis and ascetics blow Sing (a horn) or Shankha (a shell), which awakens in them this inner tone. Dervishes play Nai or Algosa (a double flute) for the same purpose. The bells and gongs in the churches and temples are meant to suggest to the thinker the same sacred sound, and thus lead him towards the inner life.

This sound develops through ten different aspects because of its manifestation through ten different tubes of the body; it sounds like thunder, the roaring of the sea, the jingling of bells, running water, the buzzing of bees, the twittering of sparrows, the Vina, the whistle, or the sound of Shankha until it finally becomes *Hu*, the most sacred of all sounds.

This sound *Hu* is the beginning and end of all sounds, be they from man, bird, beast, or thing. A careful study will prove this fact, which can be realized by listening to the sound of the steam engine or of a mill, while the echo of bells or gongs gives a typical illustration of the sound *Hu*.

The Supreme Being has been called by various names in different languages, but the mystics have known him as *Hu*, the natural name, not man-made, the only name of the Nameless, which all nature constantly proclaims. The sound *Hu* is most sacred; the mystics called it Ism-e Azam, the name of the Most High, for it is the origin and end of every sound as well as the background of each word. The word *Hu* is the spirit of all sounds and of all words, and is hidden within them all, as the spirit in the body. It does not belong to any language, but no language can help belonging to it. This alone is the true name of God, a name that no people and no religion can claim as their own. This word is not only uttered by human beings, but is repeated by animals and birds. All things and beings proclaim this name of the Lord, for every activity of life expresses distinctly or indistinctly this very sound. This is the word mentioned in the Bible as existing before the light came into being, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

The mystery of *Hu* is revealed to the Sufi who journeys through the path of initiation. Truth, the knowledge of God, is called by a Sufi *Haq*. If we divide the word *Haq* into two parts, its assonant sounds become *hu ek*, *Hu* signifying God, or truth, and *ek* in Hindustani meaning one, and both together expressing one God and one truth. *Haqiqat* in Arabic means the essential truth, *Hákim* means master, and *Hakím* means knower, all of which words express the essential characteristics of life.

Aluk is the sacred word that the Vairagis, the adepts of India, use as their sacred chant. In the word *Aluk* are expressed two words, *al* meaning the, and *Haq* truth, both words together expressing God the source from which all comes.

The sound *Hu* becomes limited in the word *Ham*, for the letter *m* closes the lips. This word in Hindustani expresses limitation because *Ham* means I or we, both of which words signify ego. The word *Hamsa* is the sacred word of the Yogis which illumines the ego with the light of reality. The word *Huma* in the Persian language stands for a fabulous bird. There is a belief that if the *Huma* bird sits for a moment on the head of anybody it is a sign that he will become a king. Its true explanation is, that when a man's thoughts so evolve that they break all limitation, then he becomes as a king. It is the limitation of language that it can only describe the Most High as something like a king. It is said in the old traditions that Zoroaster was born of a *Huma* tree. This explains the words in the Bible, 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.' In the word *Huma*, *hu* represents spirit, and the word *mah* in Arabic means water. In English the word 'human' explains two facts which are characteristic of humanity: *Hu* means God and *man* means mind, which word comes from the Sanskrit *Mana*, mind being the ordinary man. The two words united represent the idea of the God-conscious man; in other words *Hu*, God, is in all things and beings, but it is man by whom He is known. *Human* therefore may be said to mean God-conscious, God-realized, or God-man. The word *Hamd* means praise, *Hamid*, praiseworthy, and *Mohammad*, praiseful. The name of the Prophet of Islam was significant of his attitude to God.

Hur in Arabic means the beauties of the Heaven, its real meaning is the expression of heavenly beauty. *Zuhúr* in Arabic means manifestation, especially that of God in nature. *Ahura Mazda* is the name of God known to the Zoroastrians. This first word *Ahura* suggests *Hu*, upon which the whole name is built.

All of these examples signify the origin of God in the word *Hu*; and the life of God in every thing and being.

Hay in Arabic means everlasting, and *Hay-at* means life, both of which words signify the everlasting nature of God. The word *Huwal* suggests the idea of omnipresence, and *Huvva* is the origin of the name of Eve, which is symbolic of manifestation; as Adam is symbolic of life, they are named in Sanskrit Purusha and Prakriti.

Jehovah was originally Yahuva, *Ya* suggesting the word *oh* and *Hu* standing for God, while the *A* represents manifestation. *Hu* is the origin of sound, but when the sound first takes shape on the external plane, it becomes *A*, therefore *alif* or *alpha* is considered to be the first expression of *Hu*, the original word. The Sanskrit alphabet as well as that of most other languages begins with the letter *A*, as does the name of God in several tongues. The word *A* therefore expresses in English one, or first; and the sign of *alif* expresses the meaning one, as well as first. The letter *A* is pronounced without the help of the teeth or tongue, and in Sanskrit *A* always means without.

The *A* is raised to the surface when the tongue rises and touches the roof of the mouth when pronouncing the letter *l* (*lam*), and the sound ends in *m* (*mim*), the pronunciation of which closes the lips. These three essential letters of the alphabet are brought together as the mystery in the Qur'an. With *A* deepened by *ain* the word *Ilm* is formed which means knowledge. *Alim* comes from the same, and means knower. *Alam* means state or condition, the existence which is known.

When *alif* the first and *lam* the central letters are brought together they make the word *al* which means 'the' in Arabic. In English *all* suggests the meaning of the entire or absolute nature of existence.

The word *Allah*, which in Arabic means God, if divided into three parts may be interpreted as 'the One who comes from nothing'. *El* or *Ellah* has the same meaning as *Allah*. The words found in the Bible, *Eloi*, *Elohim* and *Hallelujah*, are related to the word *Allahu*.

The words *om*, *omen*, *amen* and *ameen*, which are spoken in all houses of prayer, are of the same origin; *A* in the commencement of the word expresses the beginning, and *M* in the midst signifies end; *N* the final letter is the re-echo of *M*, for *M* naturally ends in a nasal sound, the producing of which sound signifies life.

In the word *Ahud* which means God, the only Being, two meanings are involved by assonance. *A* in Sanskrit means without, and *Hudd* in Arabic means limitation.

It is from the same source that the words *Wahdat*, *Wahdaniat*, *Hádi*, *Hudá*, and *Hidayat* all come. *Wahdat* means the consciousness of self alone; *Wahdaniat* is the knowledge of self; *Hádi*, the guide; *Hudá*, to guide; *Hidayat* means guidance.

The more a Sufi listens to *Saut-e Sarmad*, the sound of the abstract, the more his consciousness becomes free from all the limitations of life. The soul floats above the physical and mental plane without any special effort on man's part, which shows its calm and peaceful state; a dreamy look comes into his eyes and his countenance becomes radiant, he experiences the unearthly joy and rapture of Wajad, or ecstasy. When ecstasy overwhelms him he is neither conscious of the physical existence nor of the mental. This is the heavenly wine, to which all Sufi poets refer, which is totally unlike the momentary intoxications of this mortal plane. A heavenly bliss then springs in the heart of a Sufi, his mind is purified from sin, his body from all impurities, and a pathway is opened for him towards the world unseen; he begins to receive inspirations, intuitions, impressions, and revelations without the least effort on his part. He is no longer dependent upon a book or a teacher, for divine wisdom, the light of his soul, the Holy Spirit, begins to shine upon him. As Sharif says, 'I by the light of soul realize that the beauty of the heavens and the grandeur of the earth are the echo of Thy magic flute'.

MUSIC

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CHAPTER I

MUSIC

MUSIC, the word we use in our everyday language, is nothing less than the picture of our Beloved. It is because music is the picture of our Beloved that we love music. But the question is, what is our Beloved and where is our Beloved? Our Beloved is that which is our source and our goal; and what we see of our Beloved before our physical eyes is the beauty which is before us; and that part of our Beloved not manifest to our eyes is that inner form of beauty of which our Beloved speaks to us. If only we would listen to the voice of all the beauty that attracts us in any form, we would find that in every aspect it tells us that behind all manifestation is the perfect Spirit, the spirit of wisdom.

What do we see as the principal expression of life in the beauty visible before us? It is movement. In line, in colour, in the changes of the seasons, in the rising and falling of the waves, in the wind, in the storm, in all the beauty of nature there is constant movement. It is movement which has caused day and night, and the changing of the seasons; and this movement has given us the comprehension of what we call time. Otherwise there would be no time, for actually there is only eternity; and this teaches us that all we love and admire, observe and comprehend, is the life hidden behind it and this life is our being.

It is owing to our limitation that we cannot see the whole being of God; but all that we love in colour, line, form or personality belongs to the real beauty, the Beloved of all. And when we trace what attracts us in this beauty which we see in all forms, we shall find that it is the movement of beauty; in other words the music. All forms of nature, for instance the flowers, are perfectly formed and coloured; the planets and stars, the earth, all give the idea of harmony, of music. The whole of nature is breathing; not

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only the living creatures but all nature; and it is only our tendency to compare that which seems living with what to us is not so living which makes us forget that all things and beings are living one perfect life. And the sign of life given by this living beauty is music.

What makes the soul of the poet dance? Music. What makes the painter paint beautiful pictures, the musician sing beautiful songs? It is the inspiration that beauty gives. Therefore the Sufi has called this beauty Saki, the divine Giver who gives the wine of life to all. What is the wine of the Sufi? Beauty in form, in line, in colour, in imagination, in sentiment, in manner; in all this he sees the one beauty. All these different forms are part of the spirit of beauty which is the life behind them, a continual blessing.

As to what we call music in everyday language, to me architecture is music, gardening is music, farming is music, painting is music, poetry is music. In all the occupations of life where beauty has been the inspiration, where the divine wine has been poured out, there is music. But among all the different arts, the art of music has been specially considered divine, because it is the exact miniature of the law working through the whole universe. For instance, if we study ourselves we shall find that the beats of the pulse and the heart, the inhaling and exhaling of the breath, are all the work of rhythm. Life depends upon the rhythmic working of the whole mechanism of the body. Breath manifests as voice, as word, as sound; and the sound is continually audible, the sound without and the sound within ourselves. That is music; it shows that there is music both outside and within ourselves.

Music inspires not only the soul of the great musician, but every infant which, the instant it comes into the world, begins to move its little arms and legs with the rhythm of music. Therefore it is no exaggeration to say that music is the language of beauty; of the One whom every living soul has loved. And when one realizes this and recognizes the perfection of all beauty as God, our Beloved, one understands why the music we experience in art and in the whole universe should be called the Divine Art.

Many in the world take music as a source of amusement, a pastime, and to many music is an art and a musician an entertainer.

Yet no one has lived in this world and has thought and felt, who has not considered music as the most sacred of all arts, for the fact is that what the art of painting cannot clearly suggest, poetry explains in words; but that which even a poet finds difficult to express in poetry is expressed in music. By this I do not only say that music is superior to art[1] and poetry, but in point of fact music excels religion; for music raises the soul of man even higher than the so-called external forms of religion.

By this it must not be understood that music can take the place of religion; for every soul is not necessarily tuned to that pitch where it can really benefit by music, nor is every music necessarily so high that it will exalt a person who hears it more than religion will do. However, for those who follow the path of the inner cult, music is essential for their spiritual development. The reason is that the soul who is seeking for that is in search of the formless God. Art no doubt is most elevating, but at the same time it contains form; poetry has words, names, suggestive of form; it is only music which has beauty, power, charm and at the same time can raise the soul beyond form.

That is why in ancient times the greatest of the prophets were great musicians. For instance, among the Hindu prophets one finds Narada, the prophet who was a musician at the same time, and Shiva, a God-like prophet, who was the inventor of the sacred Vina. Krishna is always pictured with a flute.

There is also a well-known legend of the life of Moses, which says that Moses heard a divine command on Mount Sinai in the words: *Muse ke*, Moses hark; and the revelation that thus came to him was of tone and rhythm, and he called it by the same name, Musik; and the words such as *Music* and *Musike* have come from that word. David's song and verse have been known for ages; his message was given in the form of music. Orpheus of the Greek legends, the knower of the mystery of tone and rhythm, had by this knowledge power over the hidden forces of nature. The Hindu goddess of beauty, of knowledge, whose name is Sarasvati, is always pictured with the Vina. And what does it suggest? It suggests that all harmony has its essence in music. And besides the

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[1] Hazrat Inayat Khan often uses *art* in the restricted sense of painting, drawing and sculpture.

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natural charm music possesses, it has also a magic charm that can be experienced even now. It seems that the human race has lost a great deal of the ancient science of magic, but if there remains any magic it is music.

Music, besides power, is intoxication. When it intoxicates those who hear, how much more must it intoxicate those who play or sing themselves! And how much more must it intoxicate those who have touched the perfection of music and have meditated upon it for years and years! It gives them an even greater joy and exaltation than a king feels sitting on his throne.

According to the thinkers of the East there are five different intoxications: the intoxication of beauty, youth and strength; then the intoxication of wealth; the third is of power, command, the power of ruling; and there is the fourth intoxication, which is the intoxication of learning, of knowledge. But all these four intoxications fade away just like stars before the sun in the presence of the intoxication of music. The reason is that it touches the deepest part of man's being. Music reaches farther than any other impression from the external world can reach. And the beauty of music is that it is both the source of creation and the means of absorbing it. In other words, by music the world was created, and by music it is withdrawn again into the source which has created it.

In this scientific and material world we see a similar example. Before a machine or mechanism will run, it must first make a noise. It first becomes audible and then shows its life. We can see this in a ship, in an aeroplane, in an automobile. This idea belongs to the mysticism of sound. Before an infant is capable of admiring a colour or form, it enjoys sound. If there is any art that can most please the aged it is music. If there is any art which can charge youth with life and enthusiasm, emotion and passion, it is music. If there is any art in which a person can fully express his feeling, his emotion, it is music. At the same time it is something that gives man that force and that power of activity which make the soldiers march with the beat of the drum and the sound of the trumpet. In the traditions of the past it was said that on the Last Day there will be the sound of trumpets before the end of the world comes. This shows that music is connected with the beginning of the creation, with its continuity, and with its end.

The mystics of all ages have loved music most. In almost all the circles of the inner cult, in whatever part of the world, music seems to be the centre of the cult or the ceremony. And those who attain to that perfect peace which is called Nirvana, or in the language of the Hindus Samadhi, do this more easily through music. Therefore Sufis, especially those of the Chishtia school of ancient times, have taken music as a source of their meditation; and by meditating thus they derive much more benefit from it than those who meditate without the help of music. The effect that they experience is the unfoldment of the soul, the opening of the intuitive faculties; and their heart, so to speak, opens to all the beauty which is within and without, uplifting them, and at the same time bringing them that perfection for which every soul yearns.

CHAPTER II

THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

BY this title I do not mean to encourage any superstition, or any idea that might attract people into fields of curiosity. My aim is to direct the attention of those who search for truth towards the law of music which is working throughout the universe, and which in other words may be called the law of life; the sense of proportion, the law of harmony, the law which brings about balance, the law which is hidden behind all aspects of life; which holds this universe intact and works out the destiny of the whole universe, fulfilling its purpose.

There are many in this world who look for wonders; if one only noticed how many wonders there are in this world, which is all phenomena! The deeper one sees into life, the wider life opens itself to one, and every moment of one's life then becomes full of wonders and full of splendour.

What we call music in our everyday language is only a miniature, which our intelligence has grasped from that music or harmony of the whole universe which is working behind everything, and which is the source and origin of nature. It is because of this that the wise of all ages have considered music to be a sacred art. For in music the seer can see the picture of the whole universe; and the wise can interpret the secret and the nature of the working of the whole universe in the realm of music.

This idea is not a new idea; yet at the same time it is always new. Nothing is as old as the truth, and nothing is as new as the truth. It is man's desire to search for something traditional, for something original, and for something new; all these tendencies can be satisfied in the knowledge of truth.

All the religions have taught that the origin of the whole of creation is sound. No doubt the way in which this word is used in our everyday language is a limitation of that sound which is suggested by the scriptures. Language deals with comparative objects, but that which cannot be compared has no name. Truth is that which can never be spoken; and what the wise of all ages have spoken is what they have tried their best to express, little as they were able to do so.

The music of the universe is the background of the small picture which we call music. Our sense of music, our attraction to music, shows that there is music in the depth of our being. Music is behind the working of the whole universe. Music is not only life's greatest object, but it is life itself. Hafiz, the great and wonderful Sufi poet of Persia, says, 'Many say that life entered the human body by the help of music, but the truth is that life itself is music'. What made him say this? He referred to a legend which exists in the East and which tells how God made a statue of clay in His own image, and asked the soul to enter into it; but the soul refused to be imprisoned, for its nature is to fly about freely and not to be limited and bound to any sort of capacity. The soul did not wish in the least to enter this prison. Then God asked the angels to play their music, and as the angels played the soul was moved to ecstasy, and through that ecstasy, in order to make the music more clear to itself, it entered this body. And it is told that Hafiz said, 'People say that the soul, on hearing that song, entered the body; but in reality the soul itself was song!'

It is a beautiful legend, and much more so is its mystery. The interpretation of this legend explains to us two great laws. One is that freedom is the nature of the soul, and for the soul the whole tragedy of life is the absence of that freedom which belongs to its original nature; and the next mystery that this legend reveals to us is that the only reason why the soul has entered the body of clay or matter is to experience the music of life, and to make this music clear to itself. And when we sum up these two great mysteries, the third mystery, which is the mystery of all mysteries, comes to our mind. This is that the unlimited part of ourselves becomes limited and earthbound for the purpose of making this life, which is the outward life, more intelligible.

Therefore there is a loss and a gain. The loss is the loss of freedom, and the gain is the experience of life, which is fully gained by coming into this limited life which we call the life of an individual.

What makes us feel drawn to music is that our whole being is music; our mind and our body, the nature in which we live, the nature which has made us, all that is beneath and around us, it is all music; and we are close to all this music, and live and move and have our being in music.

Therefore music interests us and attracts our attention and gives us pleasure, because it corresponds with the rhythm and tone which are keeping the mechanism of our whole being intact. What pleases us in any of our arts, whether drawing, painting, carving, architecture, sculpture, or poetry, is the harmony behind them, the music. What poetry suggests to us is music, the rhythm in the poetry or the harmony of ideas and phrases. Besides this, in painting and drawing it is our sense of proportion and our sense of harmony which give us all the pleasure we gain in admiring art. And what appeals to us in being near to nature is nature's music, and nature's music is more perfect than that of art. It gives us a sense of exaltation to be moving about in the woods, and to be looking at the green; to be standing near the running water, which has its rhythm, its tone and its harmony. The swinging of the branches in the forest, the rising and falling of the waves, all has its music. And once we contemplate and become one with nature our hearts open to its music.

We say that we enjoy nature. But what is it in nature that we enjoy? It is music. Something in us has been touched by the rhythmic movement, by the perfect harmony which is so seldom found in this artificial life of ours; it lifts one up and makes one feel that nature is the real temple, the true religion. One moment standing in the midst of nature with open heart is a whole lifetime, if one is in tune with nature.

When one looks at the cosmos, the movements of the stars and planets, the law of vibration and rhythm, all perfect and unchanging, it shows that the cosmic system is working by the law of music, the law of harmony; and whenever that harmony in the cosmic system is lacking in any way, then in proportion disaster comes to the world, and its influence is seen in the many destructive forces which manifest there. The whole of astrological law and the science of magic and mysticism behind it, are based upon music.

Therefore the whole life of the most illuminated souls who have lived in this world, like the greatest prophets in India, has been music. From the miniature music which we understand, they expanded the whole universe of music, and in that way they were able to inspire. The one who receives the key to the working of life, is he who becomes intuitive; it is he who has inspiration. It is he to whom revelations manifest, for then his language becomes music. Every person who comes to us, every object we see, is revealing. In what form? It tells us its character, nature and secrets. Every person tells us his past, present and future. In what way? Every person explains to us all that they contain. In what manner? In the form of music, if only we can hear it.

There is another language: it is rhythm and tone. We hear it, but we do not hear it with our ears. A friendly person shows harmony in his voice, in his words, in his movement and manner. An unfriendly person in his very movements, in his glance and expression, in his walk, in everything, will show disharmony if one can but see it. I had a friend in India who became cross very easily. Sometimes when he visited me I would say, 'Are you cross today?' He would ask, 'Now how do you know I am cross today?' I said, 'Your turban tells me. The way you tie your turban wrongly shows disharmony.'

One's very actions show an inharmonious or harmonious attitude. There are many things one can perceive in handwriting, but the principal thing in reading handwriting is the harmonious or inharmonious curves. It almost speaks to you and tells you the mood in which the person wrote. Handwriting tells you many things, the grade of evolution of the person who has written, his attitude towards life, his character and his mood when writing. You do not need to read the whole letter he wrote, you only have to see his handwriting. For line and curve will show him to be either harmonious or inharmonious, if only one can see it.

In every being you can see this, and if one looks with deep insight into the nature of things one will read it even in a tree. According to the fruit or flowers which the tree bears one discovers what music it expresses.

You can see from the attitude of a person whether that person will prove to be your friend, or will end in being your enemy. You need not even wait until the end; you can see at the first glance whether he is friendly inclined or not, because every person is music, perpetual music, continually going on day and night; and your intuitive faculty can hear that music. That is the reason why one person is repellent, and the other attracts you. It is the music he expresses; his whole atmosphere is charged with it.

There is a story of Omar, the well-known Khalif of Arabia. Someone who wanted to harm Omar was looking for him, and he heard that Omar did not live in palaces though he was a king, but that he spent most of his time with nature. This man was very glad to think that now he would have every opportunity to accomplish his object. And as he approached the place where Omar was sitting, the nearer he came the more his attitude changed; until in the end he dropped the dagger which was in his hand and said, 'I cannot harm you. Tell me what is the power in you that keeps me from accomplishing the object which I came to accomplish?' And Omar answered, 'My at-one-ment with God'.

What did Omar mean by that at-one-ment with God? He meant being in tune with the Infinite, in harmony with the whole universe. In other words, Omar was the receptacle of the music of the whole universe.

The great charm that the personality of the holy ones has shown in all ages has been their responsiveness to the music of the whole being. That has been the secret of how they became the friends of their worst enemies. But it is not only the power of the holy ones. It manifests in every person to a greater or lesser degree. Every one shows harmony or disharmony according to how open he is to the music of the universe. The more he is open to all that is beautiful and harmonious, the more his life is tuned to that universal harmony and the more he will show a friendly attitude towards everyone he meets. His very atmosphere will create music around him.

The difference between the material and the spiritual point of view is that the material point of view sees matter as the first thing, and considers that intelligence and beauty and everything else evolved from it. From the spiritual point of view we see the intelligence and beauty first; and from them comes all that exists. From the spiritual point of view we see that one considers last to be the same as first; and therefore in the essence of this whole being, as the basis of all that exists, there is music. One can see that in the essence of the seed of the rose there is the rose itself, its fragrance, form and beauty; and although in the end it may not be manifested, at the same time it is there. And the one who tunes himself not only to the external but to the inner being and to the essence of all things, gets an insight into the essence of the whole being; and therefore he can to the same extent find and enjoy even in the seed the fragrance and beauty which delights him in the rose.

The greatest error of this age is that activity has increased so much, that there is little margin left in one's everyday life for repose. And repose is the secret of all contemplation and meditation, the secret of getting in tune with that aspect of life which is the essence of all things. When one is not accustomed to take repose, one does not know what is behind one's being. This condition is experienced by first preparing the body and the mind by means of purification; and by making the senses fine one is able to tune one's soul with the whole Being.

It seems complex, and yet it is so simple. When one is open to one's tried friend in life, one knows so much about him; it is only a question of the opening of the heart; it is the at-one-ment with one's friend. We know his faults and his merits, but we know also how to experience and to enjoy friendship. Where there is hatred and prejudice and bitterness, there is loss of understanding. The deeper the person, the more friends he has. It is smallness, narrowness, lack of spiritual development, which makes a person exclusive, distant, different from others. He feels superior, greater, better than the others; the friendly attitude seems to have been lost. In this way he cuts himself off from others, and in this lies his tragedy. That person is never happy. The one who is happy is he who is ready to be friends with all. His outlook on life is friendly. He is not only friendly to persons, but also to objects and conditions.

It is by this attitude of friendship that man expands and breaks down those walls which keep him in prison; and by breaking down these walls he experiences at-one-ment with the Absolute. This at-one-ment with the Absolute manifests as the music of the spheres; and this he experiences on all sides, in the beauty of nature, in colours of flowers, in everything he sees and in everything he meets. In the hours of contemplation and solitude, and in the hours when he is in the midst of the world, the music is always there, he is always enjoying its harmony.

CHAPTER III

THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

(*continued*)

THE nature of creation is the doubling of one. And it is this doubling aspect which is the cause of all duality in life; one part is positive, the other negative; one expressive, the other responsive. Therefore spirit and nature in this creation of duality stand face to face. There is the first aspect which is sound, and the next which is light. In these nature-aspects, or responsive aspects, at first only the light works; but when one goes deeper in creation there is sound. In nature which is face to face with spirit, what is first expressed is light, or what man first responds to is light; and what man responds to next, what touches man deeper, is sound.

The human body is a vehicle of the spirit, a completed vehicle which experiences all the different aspects of creation. This does not mean that all other forms and names which exist in this world, some as objects, others as creatures, are not responsive to the expression of the spirit. In reality every object is responsive to the spirit and to the work of the spirit, which is active in all aspects, names and forms of the universe. One reads in the Masnavi of Rumi, that the earth, the water, the fire and the air, before man are objects, but before God they are living beings. They work at His command, as man understands living beings working under the command of a master. If creation can be explained, it is the phases of sound or of vibration, which manifest in different grades in all the various forms in life.

Even what we call matter or substance, and all that does not seem to speak or sound, is in reality all vibration. And the beauty of the whole of creation is this, that creation has worked in two ways. In one way it has expressed and in the other way it has made itself a responsive mould. For instance, there is substance, matter to touch, and there is a sense to feel, to touch. There is a sound, and at the same time there are ears which can hear sound. There is light, there is form, there are colours; and at the same time there are eyes to see them. And what man calls beauty is the harmony of all one experiences. What after all is music? What we call music is the harmony of the audible notes; but in reality there is music in colour, there is music in lines, there is music in the forest where there is a variety of trees and plants; and there is harmony in how they correspond with each other. The more widely one observes nature, the more it appeals to one's soul. Why? Because there is a music there; and the wider one's outlook on life becomes, the deeper one's understanding of life, the more music one can listen to, the music which answers the whole universe. But the one whose heart is open need not go as far as the forest; in the midst of the crowd he can find music. At this time human ideas are so changed, owing to materialism, that there is hardly any distinction of personality. But if one studies human nature, one sees that even a piano of a thousand octaves could not reproduce the variety of human nature. How people agree with one another, how they disagree; some become friends after a contact of a moment, some in many years cannot become friends. If one could only see to what pitch the different souls are tuned, in what octaves different people speak, what standards different people have! Sometimes there are two people who disagree, and there comes a third person and all unite together. Is that not the nature of music? The more one studies the harmony of music, and then studies human nature, how people agree and how they disagree, how there is attraction and repulsion, the more one will see that it is all music.

But now there is another question to be understood. That what man knows is generally the world he sees around him. Very few trouble to think that there is something beyond what they see around them. To many it is only a fable when they hear that there are two worlds. But if one looked deep within oneself one would see that it is not only two worlds; it is so many worlds that it is beyond expression. That part of one's being which is receptive is mostly closed in the average man. What he knows is expressing outwardly, and receiving from the same sphere whence he can receive from himself. For instance, the difference between a simple man and a thinking person with deeper understanding, is that when a simple person has received a word he has heard it only in his ears; whereas the thinking person has received the same word as far as his mind. The same word has reached the ears of the one and the heart of the other. If this simple example is true, it shows that one person lives only in this external world, another person lives in two worlds, and a third person lives in many worlds at the same time. When a person says, 'Where are those worlds? Are they above the sky, or down below the earth?' the answer is that all these worlds are in the same place as that person is himself.

As a poet has said, 'The heart of man, if once expanded, becomes larger than all the heavens.' The deep thinkers of all ages have therefore held that the only principle of awakening to life is the principle of emptying the self. In other words, making oneself a clearer and more complete accommodation in order to accommodate all experiences more clearly and more fully. The tragedy of life, all its sorrows and pains, belong mostly to the surface of the life of the world. If one were fully awake to life, if one could respond to life, if one could perceive life, one would not need to look for wonders, one would not need to communicate with spirits; for every atom in this world is a wonder when one sees with open eyes.

In answer to the question as to what is the experience of those who dive deep into life, and who touch the depth within, Hafiz has said, 'It is not known how far is the destination, but so much I know, that music from afar is coming to my ears'. The music of the spheres, according to the point of view of the mystic, is like the lighthouse in the port that a man sees from the sea, which tells him that he is coming nearer to his destination. What music may this be? If there were no harmony in the essence of life, life would not have created harmony in this world of variety. And man would not have longed for something which was not in his spirit. Everything in this world which seems to lack harmony is in reality the limitation of man's own vision. The wider the horizon of his observation becomes, the more harmony of life he enjoys.

In the very depth of man's being the harmony of the working of the whole universe is summed up in a perfect music. Therefore the music of the spheres is the music which is the source of creation, the music which is heard while travelling towards the goal of all creation. And it is heard and enjoyed by those who touch the very depth of their own lives.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANCIENT MUSIC

WHEN one looks at this subject from the Eastern point of view one finds that the Eastern idea of music originated from intuition. But the tradition of any art or even science will tell us the same thing. It is only later that man begins to believe in the outer things and forgets the origin, which is intuition. Music according to the ancient people was not a mechanical science or art; music was the first language. The proof of this can be found even now in the language of the animals and birds, who express their emotions and passions to one another, though there are no words, only sounds. It is the combination of the different sounds of the animals and the birds which also has an effect upon the numberless multitudes of the lower creation. If music was the first expressive thing in the lower creation, so it was in mankind also. And since it was the first expression of the emotions and passions of the heart, it is also the last expression of the emotions and passions; for what art cannot express, poetry explains; and what poetry cannot express, is expressed by music. Therefore to a thinker music in all ages will stand supreme as the highest expression of what is deepest in oneself.

When ancient music is compared with modern music, one will no doubt find a gulf which is too vast to span. But if there is anything which gives one some idea of the original music of the human race, it is Eastern music, which still has traces of the ancient music in it. And if it had been considered in the East only as music, it would perhaps not have been kept intact as it has been; but it has always been taken to be part of religion, and that is how it has been preserved for thousands of years through tradition. One might ask how the music of ancient times can be kept pure, as there is always a tendency in human nature to alter things. The point is, that it was always difficult for the human race to change its religion. Anything else might be changed, but there was one thing that was always kept, and that was religion. The religion of the Hindus has come from the Vedanta; and in the Vedanta the fifth aspect named was music, which was called Sama Veda.

One can trace back in traditions, by the study of Hindu music, that thousands of years ago they already made as fine a distinction of tones as quarter-tones. But it was not only the degree of the sound that was considered in that way, but also the nature and character of the sound was analysed, just as in chemistry. We can find today in ancient traditions the different effects attached to the different notes, whether dryness or liquidity, whether cold or heat. No doubt it is difficult today to distinguish the sounds which express these different effects, because the distinguishing is now done from the instruments, and in those times it was done only from nature. And yet it is most interesting that we find today in the Sanskrit scriptures the different pitch of sound distinguished in ancient times. In the absence of the piano or of tuning-forks they had to determine the pitch by the sound of different animals and birds; and also the sound was distinguished in different aspects of one special thing. This scientific aspect developed in the same way as the art of the ancient Hindu music. One might wonder about this, thinking it perhaps natural that art should develop thus because these people were so near to nature; but that science was so developed at that time is, in a way, more interesting.

Of the way the art developed among the ancient people references are to be found even now in the East. The idea was that they attached different themes of music to different seasons, and different strains of music to different times of the day and night. And as there is nothing in the world which is without reason, that also was not only an imagination or a fancy; there was a logical reason for attributing certain melodies to certain times. If it had been only a poetic fancy, it would have lasted for a short period and would have influenced only a limited circle. But it has lasted for ages, up till now, and has influenced the whole country; it is a usage which was carried on for thousands of years; and today in the East or West, North or South, the same raga is to be found sung at the same time. When sung out of that time, it is not appealing.

When we look at it from the metaphysical point of view, we shall find that the realization that science has today and will ever have, that vibration is at the root of the whole of creation, was a certainty to these ancient people and was the basis of their whole science. They knew that that which has created and which is holding, the whole manifestation and the whole cosmos, is one power: vibration. And it is because of this that astrological science, which had much to do with the way human beings and different countries were influenced, also arose from that science of vibration. And thus music as a science was known by them to have a great deal to do with the influence of the planets, and the continual moving and working of the planets and their action upon the earth were the basis of the ragas on which their music was founded.

In the Sanskrit tradition of ancient times there were verses to be found having relation to certain planets. Therefore according to the influence of the planets and of the cosmos, they made their programme; and that programme was carried out through the whole year. One might think that these influences would be too vague to perceive, that one could not make a programme upon the influence of the planets; nevertheless humanity in all periods has arranged its life according to the planetary influences.

In order to keep their music close to nature it was necessary for them to give liberty to the singer and player to sing and play as they wished. Naturally uniformity was lacking, and a standardized system could not be made. That is why their music always remained an individualistic art, not a general education. The music of the ancient people therefore had its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages were this: that a musician, a singer or a player was never bound to sing in a particular way in order to execute properly the music he wanted to place before people, but was always free to give it according to his inspiration at the time. It gave him full liberty to express his emotions, his passions, without any outward restriction which he should obey. No doubt when there were a number of singers and players it was necessary to set a certain standard. Yet that standard did not restrict them very much. And it is this order which was called music.

The word music, or *Sangita* in Sanskrit, has three aspects. One aspect is language; the other aspect is playing; and the third aspect is movement. The Hindus have never regarded the science of movement or dance as something separate from music; they have always combined the three aspects of what they called music. As the music of the Eastern people developed, each of these three aspects developed also. For instance, the singing of the more refined people was quite different from that of the peasants; the song of the temple was altogether different from the song of the stage. It was not only that there were particular rules and regulations to be followed, a mechanical difference, but there was also a natural difference.

The most important or valuable thing about the music of the ancient people, which so greatly benefited humanity, was that they distinguished the different aspects of music, and thereby came to realize that there was a certain way of expressing the tone and rhythm which brought about a greater emotion or inclination towards action; and they found out, together with this, that there was a certain use of time and rhythm which brought about a greater equilibrium and a greater poise. This science, developing after many years of practice, formed in itself a special psychological science or art; and this science was called Mantra Yoga.

The meaning of the word Yoga is unity, or connection; and Mantra Yoga means the sacred union between the outer life and the deeper life. For the Yogis discovered that there are psychological inclinations. For instance, one of the tendencies of the breath is to go outward, and the other inclination is to go inward. And these two tendencies are to be found in nature also, in the ebb and flow, in the sunset and sunrise. One sees these differences in oneself; the vibrations of one's own body and action are very different in the morning and in the evening. Therefore the Yogis regulated the rhythm of the circulation, of the heart, and of every action of the breath, by the help of the vibration of music, of both tone and rhythm. This brought them from the audible vibrations to the inward vibrations, that is to say from sound to breath; and for these the Hindus have one and the same word: *Sura*, a name for both sound and breath. One thing blends into another, because it is the same thing in the end. It is the breath of an object which may be called sound; and it is the audibility of the breath which may be called voice. And therefore breath and voice are not two things; even breath and sound are not two things if one could understand that both have the same basis.

If there is any explanation of why man rejoices or is impressed by the music played to him it is this. Is it only an amusement or a pastime? No, there is something else besides that. The principal reason is that in man there is a perpetual rhythm going on, which is the sign of life in him; a rhythm which is expressed in his pulsation and his heartbeats, even in his heart. And upon this rhythm depends his health; not only his health, but his moods. Therefore, anywhere, a continued rhythm must have an effect upon every person; and upon each person its effect is distinct and different.

It is amusing and interesting to know that when jazz came into fashion everyone said, 'Something crazy has come into society', and yet no one has really resisted. It has come more and more into fashion. Yet however much a person hates it and is prejudiced against its name, he at least likes to stand and listen to it for five minutes. What is the reason? The reason is that in whatever form the rhythm is emphasized, the effect upon both body and mind is psychological. It is said of a very great Persian poet, who was also a mystic, that when he got into a certain mood he used to make circles around a pillar which stood in the middle of his house. Then he would begin to speak, and people would write down what he said, and it would be perfect poetry. And there was a lawyer who, when he could not find an argument at the bar, would turn himself around, and after that he would find the right argument.

But in looking for a mystery we do not need to go to these extreme cases. A person, when he cannot find an idea, taps with his fingers on the table, and the idea comes. And many who cannot get hold of their thoughts, begin to walk about the room; and when they have made two or three circles, their thoughts become clear. If this is true, we come to the realization that the human body is a kind of mechanism which must go on regularly. If this is stopped in some way, there is something stopped in the body or in the mind. This brings one to the understanding that upon rhythm the mood, the health, and the condition of man's mind depend; not only on the rhythm which he gets from music, but also on the rhythm of his own breath. This rhythm has also a great deal to do with the rhythm of his life.

It is also very true that there are certain kinds of sound which irritate man and have a bad effect upon the nerves; but there are other kinds of rhythm which have a soothing, healing and comforting effect upon the mind.

Music is sound and rhythm. And if sound and rhythm were understood in their nature and character, then music would not only be used as a pastime, but would become a source of healing and upliftment. The Sufis of ancient times, the great mystics, used to develop this art to bring about poise in life after their everyday activity.

Some Sufis who adopt a certain method of progress on the spiritual path and who try to live a life as far away from the world as possible are known as dervishes. They are also often called faqirs, and have great powers of wonder-working and of insight. They are dreamers and lovers of God. They worship God in nature, especially in human nature. Among many ways of spiritual development they have one called Suma, which is listening to music. They listen to music in an assembly of the initiated; no one uninitiated is allowed to enter their assembly. They address one another saying, 'O king of kings, O sovereign of all sovereigns', and are mostly clad in patched robes or in rags. They never think of tomorrow, their thought is only for the moment; to quench the thirst and to satisfy the hunger of the moment. The care of tomorrow they leave to the morrow; it is just with now that they are concerned, if they are at all concerned with life. They are the ones who are really entitled to enjoy the beauty of music; whose spirit and soul are responsive, with open centres, who make themselves into a medium of resonance for the music they hear; therefore music touches them differently from any other people; music touches the deepest part of their being. Thus moved by music, they manifest various states, termed by Sufis Hál. Anyone among them who is moved by the spirit may manifest ecstasy, Wajad, in the form of tears, sighs, or dance.

This is the reason why those who do not understand the meaning of their dance call them howling dervishes or dancing dervishes. The gold of heaven is dust to the worldly man, and the gold of the earth is dust to the heavenly. To either the gold of the other means nothing but dust; their coins are not interchangeable. Therefore the bliss of the dervish is understood by very few.

But one can learn from this the theory of the whole process of their spiritual development. By making God their Beloved, and by seeing God in the sublimity of nature, they create the presence of God; and as the whole process of daily life consists of both joy and pain, so the life of the dervish is also filled with both joy and pain in the presence of God. By the help of concentration, poetry and music, joy and pain are felt more deeply. Therefore God becomes living to him; His presence is before him in all his moods. When once his pain has had an outlet in some form or other in the Suma, the musical ceremony, the condition that follows it is that of deeper insight into life. Upon whatever object or person he may cast his glance, their deepest nature, character and secret are revealed to his soul; thus the whole life is made clear to his vision in the light of God.

Suma has been the most sacred treasure for the Sufis; the great poets such as Rumi of Persia used to have music for their meditation; and by the help of music they used to still and control the activity of their body and mind.

We see today that there is an increasing tendency to nervousness. It is caused by too much activity in life. Life is becoming more and more artificial every day, and with every step forward man is yet missing that repose which has been as yeast to the human race. Therefore for the betterment and education of humanity today the art of repose, which seems to be lost, greatly needs to be rediscovered.

CHAPTER V

THE SCIENCE AND ART OF HINDU MUSIC

MUSIC, literature and philosophy are akin to our souls, whatever be our faith or belief or our way of looking at life. India, in the history of the world, represents a country and a people engaged in the search for truth through the realm of music, philosophy and poetry at a time when the rest of the world had not yet begun to do so. It is therefore necessary to study Indian music, philosophy and poetry in order to understand their foundation. Linguists today agree that the Sanskrit language was the origin or mother of many languages; the origin of the science of music is also to be found in Sanskrit.

It is a fact that not only art, but even science has its source in intuition. This seems to have been sometimes forgotten, but undoubtedly even the scientist is helped by intuition, although he may not always recognize the fact. Scientists who have delved deeply into their science will admit this. Intuition working in answer to the need of the mind and the body, inventing, through matter, things of daily use, and gaining a knowledge of the nature and character of things, is called science; and intuition working through the beauty which is produced in the form of line and colour and rhythm, is called art. Therefore the source of both science and art is intuition.

Realizing this source, the Hindus based their music on intuition, and the practice of Indian music has been a culture of stimulating intuition, and awakening the faculty of appreciating beautiful sounds and often words, and expressing itself in beautiful forms.

In India life has always begun with the soul; therefore science, art, philosophy and mysticism were all directed to one and the same goal. And not only arts and sciences, but even professions and commerce were not without a religious view. One can imagine how in a country where even business and professional men had a spiritual outlook, the musician's life was full of religious thought.

No part of the world, East or West, can really deny the divinity of music. In the first place music is the language of the soul; and for two people of different nations or races to unite there is no better means than music. For music not only unites man to man, but man to God. Now the question comes: when is it that music unites man with God, and how? Belief in God has two aspects. One belief in God is when a person thinks, 'Perhaps there is a God', or 'As others believe I believe too'. He does not know God by reason nor does he see God before him. God for him is perhaps in heaven. Whether He exists or does not exist, he does not know. And from one who has this kind of belief, a little confusion or disappointment or injustice takes it away. It is for this reason that thousands and thousands of men who worshipped God gave up their belief in Him.

There is another aspect of belief, and it is gained through the realization of God's presence, not only in the heavens, but in one's own surroundings. When a person arrives at this point, this belief becomes a living identity. To him God is not only a judge or a sustainer; to him He is a friend who hears the cry of his soul in the solitude, and knows the best and greatest secret he has in his heart; a Friend upon whom one can always rely in good and bad experiences, and even in the hereafter. For a musician, music is the best way to unite with God. A musician with a belief in God brings to God the beauty and the perfume and the colour of his soul.

From the metaphysical point of view there is nothing that can touch the formless except the art of music which in itself is formless. There is another point of view: that the innermost being of man is the Akasha, which means capacity. Therefore all that is directed from the external world to the world within can reach this realm, and music can reach it best. A third point of view is that all creation has come from vibrations, which the Hindus have called Nada; and in the Bible we can find it as the Word, which came first of all. On this point all the different religions unite. Man, therefore, loves music more than anything else.

Music is his nature, it has come from vibrations and he himself is vibration.

There are two aspects of life: the first is that man is tuned by his surroundings, and the second is that man can tune himself in spite of his surroundings. This latter is the work of the mystic. The Sufis in the East work for years together to tune themselves. By the help of music they tune themselves to the spheres where they wish to be, as the Yogis do. Therefore the beginning of music in India was at the time of Shiva, Lord of the Yogis. The great Yogi teacher taught to the world the science of breath. Among the Sufis there was a great saint, Moin-ud-Din Chishti of Ajmer. At his grave music is played, and Hindus and Moslems go there on pilgrimage. This shows that the religion of the knowers of truth is the religion of God; and the prayer of the greatest devotee rises from his heart into the realm of music. All the various methods of bringing about calm and peace can be attained through the help of music.

The music of India can be divided into four periods: the Sanskrit period, the Prakrit period, the Moghul period and the modern period. The Sanskrit period is on mystical lines. The Prakrit period is expressive of emotions of different sorts. In the Moghul period music was influenced by Persia and Arabia, and developed into the modern music. Besides this the two different races in India, the Dravidians and the Aryans, both had their own tradition of music; the Dravidians or Karnatic race produced the music of Southern India, and the Aryans or Hindus produced the music of Northern India.

The science of Indian music has come from three sources: mathematics, astrology and psychology. We find this in Western music also, for the entire science of harmony and counterpoint is based on mathematics. In Sanskrit the science of Hindu music is called *Prestara*, which means mathematical arrangement of rhythm and modes.

In the Indian system there are a great many modes and rhythms which are used in everyday music. The modes are called *ragas*, and they are grouped in four classes. One class has seven notes, as in the natural scale of Western music. Then there are the modes of six notes, where one note of the seven-note raga is omitted; that gives quite another effect to the octave and has a different influence on the human mind. There are also ragas of five notes, omitting two notes of the scale. In China they use a scale of four notes, but not in India.

Some say that the origin of the scale of four or five notes lies in the natural instinct that man shows in his discovery of instruments. The first instrument was the flute, symbolical of the human voice; it seems natural that after taking a piece of reed from the forest, man would make four holes in that reed at distances where he could place the tips of his fingers without effort, and would then make one hole below. That made the raga of five notes. It was only later that scientists arrived at the knowledge of vibrations; but this scale comes naturally when a man places his hand on the reed, and a great psychological power seems to be attached to it. It has a great influence on human nature; and this shows that the power of anything deriving directly from nature is much greater than when man has made changes and alterations in order to create a new form in art.

The science of astrology was based on the science of cosmic vibrations, for everything depends on vibratory conditions, including the position of the stars and the planets and of individuals, nations, races and all objects. A great deal of secret power which the Hindus have found in the science of music has been derived from the science of astrology. Every note of the Hindu music corresponds with a certain planet; and every note reflects a certain pitch of the animal world.

In the ancient Vedas the science of the elements, fire, water, air and ether, is to be found; but these words should not be taken as meaning the same as in everyday language. The element of water for instance signifies a liquid state, fire signifies heat or warmth. Through this science the Hindus have been able to arrange ragas or modes to be sung or played at a certain time of day or night; and undoubtedly those who knew the alchemy of vibrations have worked wonders by the power of music. After the songs have been sung for thousands of years, the race has developed such a sense of appreciation of these ragas, that even an ordinary man in the street cannot bear to hear a morning raga sung in the evening. He may not know the notes, but to his ears it sounds disagreeable; he cannot stand it. It is like taking a stroll on a midsummer morning wearing an evening dress! We may say it is a matter of habit, and that is true, but at the same time a mode that should be sung in the middle of the night loses its beautiful influence if we sing it at noon.

Every planet has a certain influence, and there must be a certain mode to answer it. If this is not taken into consideration music may become a pastime, but it does not do the work for which it is designed.

To an Indian music is not an amusement or only for entertainment. It is something more than that. It answers the deepest demands of his soul. Man is not only a physical body, he has a mind too. The body hungers for food, and what generally happens is that man only ministers to his bodily needs and gives no attention to his inner existence and its demands. He experiences momentary satisfaction but then he hungers again, not knowing that the soul is the finest of man's being. And so that unconscious craving of the soul remains.

In the undeveloped person that silent craving of the soul becomes something disagreeable and makes him restless or irritated. He does not feel contented with anything in life, he feels like quarrelling and fighting. In the person of fine feeling, this hunger of the soul expresses itself in depression or despair. He finds some satisfaction in love of reading, love of art.

The soul feels buried in the outer, material world, and the soul feels satisfied and living when it is touched with fine vibrations. The finest matter is spirit, and the grosser spirit is matter. Music, being the finest of the arts, helps the soul to rise above differences. It unites souls, because even words are not necessary. Music is beyond words.

The Hindu music is unique in character, for the player and singer are given perfect freedom in expressing their soul through their art. The character of the Indian nature can be understood by the spirit of individualism. The whole education tends to individualism, to express one's self in whatever form one is capable of. Therefore in some ways to their disadvantage, but in many ways to their advantage, they have to express their freedom. Uniformity has its advantages, but it very often paralyses progress in art.

There are two ways in life, uniformity and individualism. Uniformity has its strength, but individualism has its beauty. When one hears an artist, a singer of Hindu music, the first thing he will do is to tune his *támbura*,[1] to give one chord; and while he tunes his támbura he tunes his own soul, and this has such an influence on his hearers that they can wait patiently, often for a considerable time. Once he finds he is in tune with his instrument, with that chord, his soul, mind and body all seem to be one with the instrument. A person with a sensitive heart listening to his song, even a foreigner, will perceive the way he sings into that chord, the way he tunes his spirit to that chord. And by that time he has become concentrated; by that time he has tuned himself to all who are there. Not only has he tuned the instrument, but he has felt the need of every soul in the audience and the demands of their souls, what they want at that time. Not every musician can do this, but the best can. And when he synthesizes, and it all comes automatically as he begins his song, it seems that it touches every person in the audience, for it is all the answer to the demand of the souls that are sitting there. He has not made a programme beforehand; he does not know what he will sing next; but each time he is inspired to sing a certain song, or to play a certain mode. He becomes an instrument of the whole cosmic system, open to all inspiration, at one with the audience, in tune with the chord of the támbura, and it is not only music, but spiritual phenomena that he gives to the people.

The traditional ancient songs of India composed by great Masters have been handed down from father to son. The way music is taught is different from the Western way. It is not always written, but it is taught by imitation. The teacher sings and the pupil imitates, and all the intricacies and subtleties are learned by imitation.

It is the mystical aspect of music which has been the secret of all religions. The great ones of this world such as Christ, Buddha and others have come from time to time to be examples for the people, and to express that perfection which is the object of every soul. The secret which was hidden behind all these great religions, and in the work of these teachers, was that man should reach that utmost height which is called perfection; and it is the principle which is taught from the first lesson the musician gives to his pupils. The pupil does not only imitate the teacher; but he focuses his spirit upon the spirit of the teacher; and he not only learns, but he inherits from his teacher.

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[1] Stringed instrument used for accompaniment and giving a drone.

The lack we find today of spiritual awakening, the reason so many seekers after truth have not come to a satisfactory result, is that they always pursue it outwardly; they take it from a book or learn it from a teacher. There was a time in the East, and this still exists even now, when a little boy who went to a teacher to learn, had a great regard for his teacher; his respect, his attitude towards his teacher was as it would be towards a priest; therefore in this manner he learned to value and appreciate and respect the knowledge of the teacher. It is most wonderful to read about the lives of the great singers of India, how they imitated their teachers, and how they sometimes became even greater than their teacher.

The object of Indian music is the training of the mind and the soul, for music is the best way of concentration. When you tell a person to concentrate on a certain object, the very fact of trying to concentrate makes his mind more disturbed. But music, which attracts the soul, keeps the mind concentrated. If one only knows how to appreciate it and give one's mind to it, keeping all other things away, one naturally develops the power of concentration.

Besides the beauty of music, there is the tenderness, which brings life to the heart. For a person of fine feelings, of kindly thought, life in the world is very trying. It is jarring, and it sometimes has a freezing effect. It makes the heart, so to speak, frozen. In that condition one experiences depression, and the whole of life becomes distasteful; the very life, which is meant to be heaven, becomes a place of suffering.

If one can focus one's heart on music, it is just like warming something which was frozen. The heart returns to its natural condition, and the rhythm regulates the beating of the heart, which helps to restore health of body, mind and soul, and bring them to their proper tuning. The joy of life depends upon the perfect tuning of mind and body.

CHAPTER VI

THE VINA

A GREAT Indian poet sang in Sanskrit the praise of the vina, 'That instrument of gut strings! By looking at it, by touching it, by hearing it, you can be made free, even if you kill a Brahmin!' And to kill a Brahmin is considered to be the greatest of all sins.

This instrument was invented by the Lord of Yogis, Shiva, whose name is also Mahadeva. He gave to the world his lifelong experiences in the practice of Yoga and is worshipped in India as a godhead. His scriptures are considered to be holy. He was a great master of breathing and an ascetic; he lived in the mountains, where he sat and breathed the free air of the wide horizons of the East and practised Mantras, words and phrases which change the whole being of man. Then he wanted to make some instrument to be used for higher exaltation through music. In the forest he cut a piece of bamboo. He then took two pumpkins, hollowed them out and tied them on to the bamboo. He made gut strings from animals and these he tied on to the instrument; in this way he made his first vina, and he practised on it in the solitude. It is told that when the deer in the forest heard him play they used to say, 'Make the strings of my own veins, and put them on your vina, but as long as I live, continue to play'.

Mahadeva made his instrument as a help for the human body and mind, considering its condition in the morning, in the midst of the day, in the afternoon, in the night and when waking at dawn. He found that at every time of the day and night a particular effect was made upon the human body and spirit, and that a rhythm akin to that particular time should be prescribed psychologically and mystically in order to elevate the soul. And therefore a psychological science of music was made by Mahadeva, a science which was called Raga which means emotion; emotion controlled and used to the best purpose. When his consort Parvati saw this instrument, she said, 'I must invent *my* vina'. So she took halves of the pumpkins and produced another kind of vina, the Sarasvati vina. So there are two vinas; one is played by men, the other by women. On this latter instrument not only sharp and flat notes are produced, but also micro-tones, and in this way the music becomes rich. But to develop the science of micro-tones is so difficult that it takes a lifetime.

The musicians of India devote twelve hours or more of the day to the practice of the different rhythms, improvizing on them. And in the end they produce a psychological effect which is not music but magic; a magic that can thrill a person and that can penetrate the heart of man. It is a dream, a meditation; it is paradise. When hearing it, one feels one is in a different world. Yet their music is hardly audible. Instead of it being played before thousands of people, only one or two or three persons of the same quality and nature come together to enjoy that music thoroughly. If a foreign element is present the musician does not feel inspired.

Once a musician was invited to play the vina. The musician came and was welcomed. He uncovered his vina. Then he looked here and there, and found some discord. He covered his vina, saluted and began to leave. Those present felt disappointed and begged him to play; but his answer was, 'No matter what you give me, I do not feel like playing'. This is a very different thing from making a programme months ahead. The musician in the West is bound six months beforehand to play a certain programme; he is helpless. But in this way it is not music, it is labour, it is done mechanically. A singer in the East never knows what he is going to sing before he starts singing. He feels the atmosphere of the place and the time and then begins to sing or to play whatever comes to his mind. It is a very special thing. I do not mean to say that music of this kind can be universal music; it belongs to some rare person in a secluded place.

In India musicians are now dying out because of lack of appreciation. Those potentates, those Gurus, those teachers of high inspiration who lived in the past, appreciated this music. But even in India people are becoming industrialized and more materialistic, and music is dying. There are very few now of those musicians of former times who would make all those who listened spellbound; they hardly exist any longer. Among millions there are perhaps three or four and they will have vanished in a few years. Maybe one day the Western world will awaken to India's music as now the West is awakening to the poetry of the East, and beginning to appreciate such works as those of Rabindranath Tagore. There will come a time when they will ask for music of that kind too, and then it will not be found, it will be too late. But there is no doubt that if that music which is magic and which is built on a psychological basis is introduced in the West, it will root out all such things as jazz. People seem to spoil their senses; this music is destroying their delicacy of sense. Thousands every day are dancing to jazz-music and they forget the effect it has upon their spirit, upon their mind, upon their delicate senses.

There was a prince of Rampur who wanted to study music with a great teacher. But the teacher knew the character of the prince who was fond of music, and he understood that many musicians would want to show their talent before him. He said, 'I can only teach you on one condition; I do not want you to hear any musician who is not an accomplished artist, because your sense of music must not be destroyed; it must be preserved for delicate music, it must be able to appreciate its fine intricacies.'

When the education of the public destroys the delicacy of its musical appreciation, it cannot help the fact that it does not like listening to real music but prefers jazz. Instead of going forward, it is going backward. And if music which is the central theme of the whole human culture is not helping people to go forward, it is a great pity.

Vina-music is very much like the human voice. If you heard the vina played, you would never think that it is an instrument. Vina-music is not as magnetic as the music of the human voice, but it is more attractive, more impressive; and all the delicacies of the human voice and its silky structure are perfected in the sound of the vina.

CHAPTER VII

THE MANIFESTATION OF SOUND ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE

MODERN science has discovered recently, that on certain plates the impression of sound can be made clearly visible. In reality the impression of sound falls clearly on all objects, only it it not always visible. It remains for a certain time on an object and then it disappears. Those who have scientifically studied the different impressions that are made by sound, have found the clear forms of leaves and flowers and other things of nature, which is proof of the belief held by the ancient people, that the creative source in its first step towards manifestation was audible, and in its next step visible. It also shows that all we see in this objective world, every form, has been constructed by sound and is the phenomenon of sound.

When we look further into this subject from a mystical point of view, we see that every syllable has a certain effect. As the form of every sound is different, so every syllable has a special effect; and therefore every sound made or word spoken before an object has charged that object with a certain magnetism. This explains to us the method of the healers, teachers and mystics, who by the power of sound charged an object with their healing power, with their power of thought. And when this object was given as a drink or as food, it brought about the desired result. Besides that, many masters of occult sciences, who have communicated with the unseen beings by the power of sound, have done still greater things. By the power of sound they have created beings; in other words by the power of sound they gave a body to a soul, to a spirit, making it into a kind of being which is not yet a physical being but a being of a higher kind. They called such beings Muwakkals; and they worked through these beings, using them in any direction of life for a certain purpose.

The physical effect of sound has also a great influence upon the human body. The whole mechanism, the muscles, the blood circulation, the nerves, are all moved by the power of vibration. As there is resonance for every sound, so the human body is a living resonator for sound. Although by sound one can easily produce a resonance in all such substances as brass and copper, yet there is no greater and more living resonator of sound than the human body. Sound has an effect on each atom of the body, for each atom resounds; on all glands, on the circulation of the blood and on pulsation, sound has an effect.

In India a feast is celebrated every year where the people commemorate the great heroes of the past and mourn over their life's tragedy; and certain instruments are played, certain drums, sometimes very badly and sometimes better. And there are some who on hearing those drums instantly fall into ecstasy; because the sound of the drum goes directly into their whole system, bringing it to a certain pitch where they feel ecstasy. And when they are in ecstasy they can jump into the fire and come out without being burned; they can cut themselves with a sword and they are instantly healed; they can eat fire and they are not burned. One can see it every year at that particular time.

They call such a condition *Hál*. Hál means the same as condition; it is an appropriate term for it, because by hearing the drum they think of that condition and then they enter into it. They need not be very educated to go into that trance, nor very evolved; sometimes they are very ordinary people; but sound can have such effect upon them that they are moved to a higher ecstasy.

The question was raised by a physician in San Francisco, Dr. Abrams, of how the sudden healing of a sword-cut in ecstasy is brought about. Although all other doctors disagreed with him, he intuitively thought that by the help of vibrations illnesses could be cured. But instead of looking for the power of vibrations in the word, he wanted to find it in electricity. Yet the principle is the same: he took the rate of vibrations of the body, and by the same rate of electrical vibrations he treated the elements of the body. He began to get some good results, but it is a subject which will need at least a century to develop fully. It is a vast subject and this is just a beginning; therefore there is still no end to the errors; but at the same time, if people could bear with it, after many years something might come out of it which could be of great use to the medical world.

This example shows that when a man can cut himself and be healed at the same time, he has created such a condition in his body that its vibrations are able to heal any wound immediately. But when that same person is not in that condition, then if there is a cut, he cannot be healed; he must be in that particular condition; the vibrations must be working at that particular rate.

There is a school of Sufis in the East which is called the Rafai school. Their main object is to increase the power of spirit over matter. Experiments such as eating fire or jumping into the fire or cutting the body are made in order to get power and control over matter. The secret of the whole phenomenon is that by the power of words they try to tune their body to that pitch of vibration where no fire, no cut, nothing, can touch it. Because the vibrations of their body are equal to fire, therefore the fire has no effect.

Now coming to the question of music, why has music an effect upon a person, why does someone naturally like music? It is not because he is trained in it or because it is a habit, but because attraction is a natural effect of sound. One may ask why it is that some people have no feeling for music. It is because that feeling has not yet been created in them. The day when they begin to feel life, they will begin to enjoy music also.

It is on this account that the wise considered the science of sound to be the most important science in every condition of life: in healing, in teaching, in evolving, and in accomplishing all things in life. It is on this foundation that the science of Zikr was developed by the Sufis, and that the Yogis made Mantra Shastra. By Zikr is not meant here one particular phrase, but a science of words. In the spoken word finer vibrations act. The vibrations of the air are nothing; but because every word has a breath behind it, and breath has a spiritual vibration, the action of breath works physically while at the same time breath itself is an electric current. The breath is not only the air, but an electric current; therefore it is an inner vibration.

Apart from the meaning a word has, even the sound of the syllables can bring about a good result or a disastrous result. Those who know about this can recall several instances in history when, through the mistake of a poet who did not use the proper words in the praise of a king, his kingdom was destroyed. And yet how little one thinks about this! In saying, 'Well, I may have said it, but I did not mean it', people believe that by saying something they have done nothing as long as they did not mean it. But even saying something without meaning has a great effect upon life.

The science of sound can be used in education, in business, in industry, in commerce, in politics, in order to bring about a desired result. But the best use of it is made in spiritual evolution; by the power of sound or word one can evolve spiritually and experience all the different stages of spiritual perfection. Music is the best medium for awakening the soul; there is nothing better. Music is the shortest, the most direct way to God; but one must know what music and how to use it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EFFECT OF SOUND ON THE PHYSICAL BODY

WIND-INSTRUMENTS, instruments with gut or steel strings, and instruments of percussion, such as drums and cymbals, have each a distinct, different, and particular effect on the physical body. There was a time when thinkers knew this and used sound for healing and for spiritual purposes. It was on that principle that the music of India was based. The different ragas and the notes which these ragas contain were supposed to produce a certain healing or elevating effect.

Sound first touches the physical plane; when we consider what effect single notes or sounds can have upon the physical body, this will lead us to think deeply on the subject. Even today there are snake-charmers, mostly to be found in India, who by playing their *pungi*, a simple wind-instrument, attract cobras and other snakes from the vicinity. Often and often this experiment has been made, and one has always seen that snakes of any kind are attracted on hearing the sound of the pungi. First they come out of the hole in which they live; and then there is a certain effect on their nervous system which draws them closer and closer to the sound of the pungi. They forget that instinct which is seen in every creature of protecting itself from the attack of man or of other creatures; at that time they absolutely forget, they do not see anyone or anything. They are then aroused to ecstasy; the cobra begins to raise its head and move it right and left; and as long as this instrument is played the cobra continues to move in ecstasy. This shows us that, as well as the psychical effect and the spiritual effect that sound has on man, there is also a physical effect.

From the metaphysical point of view the breath is the life-current or Prana; and this life-current exists also in such things as the gut string or the skin of drums. There is a part of life in these things too, and it is to the extent that their life-current becomes audible, that it touches the life-current of the living creatures and gives it an added life. It is for this reason that primitive tribes, who have only a drum or a simple instrument to blow, get into such a condition by the continual playing of these instruments that they enjoy the state of ecstasy.

How does the great success of jazz come about? It comes from the same principle. It does not make the brain think much about the technicality of music; it does not trouble the soul to think of spiritual things; it does not trouble the heart to feel deeply; without affecting the heart or the soul it touches the physical body. It gives it a renewed strength by the continuation of a particular rhythm and a particular sound; that gives people—I mean the generality—a greater strength and vigour and interest than music which strains the mind. Those who do not wish to be spiritually elevated, who do not believe in spiritual things and who do not wish to trouble, it leaves alone; yet at the same time it affects everyone who hears it.

When you compare the voice with the instrument, there is no real comparison, because the voice itself is alive. The movement, the glance, the touch, even the breath that comes from the nostrils, do not reach as far as the voice reaches.

There are three degrees of breath-current. One degree is the simple breath which is inhaled and exhaled by the nostrils. This current reaches outside and has a certain effect. A greater degree of breath-current is blowing. When a person blows from his lips, that breath-current is directed more intensely; therefore healers who have understood this principle make use of it. And the third degree, in which the breath is most intense, is sound; because in that degree the breath, coming in the form of sound, is vitalized.

In the Middle East, among Orthodox Christians and Armenians, there is a custom that they do not use an organ in church; they use a chord or sound made by ten or twelve persons sitting with closed lips, And anyone who has heard it will say that they are right; the sound of the organ is most artificial in comparison with the sound produced by the voices of ten or twelve persons with closed lips. It has such a wonderfully magical effect, it reaches so far and so deeply into the heart of man, and it produces such a religious atmosphere, that one feels that there is no necessity for an organ; it is a natural organ which God has made.

Brahmins when they study the Vedas, even now do not study only what is written there or the meaning of it; they study also the pronunciation of each syllable, of each word, of each sound; and they study it for years and years and years. The Brahmin does not hear the sound once with the ears and think, 'I have learned it'. No; he believes that a thousand repetitions of the word will one day produce that magnetism, that electricity, that life-current which is necessary and which only comes by repetition.

Now what action does this life-current take, which comes through the breath and manifests as a voice and touches another person? It touches the five senses: the sense of sight, the sense of hearing, the sense of smell, the sense of taste, and the sense of touch; although it comes directly through the sense of hearing. But a person does not hear sound only through his ears; he hears sound through every pore of his body. It permeates the entire being, and according to its particular influence either slows the rhythm or quickens the rhythm of the blood circulation; it either wakens the nervous system or soothes it. It arouses a person to greater passions or it calms him by bringing him peace. According to the sound and its influence a certain effect is produced.

Therefore the knowledge of sound can give a person a magical instrument by which to wind and tune and control and use the life of another person to the best advantage. The ancient singers used to experience the effect of their spiritual practices upon themselves first. They used to sing one note for about half an hour and study the effect of that same note upon all the different centres of their body: what life-current it produced, how it opened the intuitive faculties, how it created enthusiasm, how it gave added energy, how it soothed and how it healed. For them it was not a theory; it was an experience.

Sound becomes visible in the form of radiance. This shows that the same energy which goes into the form of sound before being visible is absorbed by the physical body. In that way the physical body recuperates and becomes charged with new magnetism.

By a keen study of psychology you will find that singers have a greater magnetism than the average person. Because of their own practising their voice makes an effect upon themselves, and they produce electricity in themselves; and in that way they are charged with new magnetism every time they practise. This is the secret of the singer's magnetism.

Coming to the question which is the right and which is the wrong use of sound, it all depends upon the particular case; in one case a certain sound may be rightly used and in another case the same sound may be wrongly used; but whether it was right or wrong can be seen by the harmonious or disharmonious effects it produces. Every pitch which is a natural pitch of the voice will be a source of a person's own healing as well as of that of others when he sings a note of that pitch. But the person who has found the key-note of his own voice has found the key of his own life. That person, by the key-note of his own voice, can then wind his own being, and he can help others. There are, however, many occasions when this knowledge is not enough, as it only concerns oneself, the knowledge of what is one's own note, and the natural pitch of one's own voice.

The great pity in the world of sound today is that people are going far away from what is called the natural voice; and this is brought about by commercialism. First a hall was made for one hundred persons, then for five hundred, and then for five thousand. A man must shout to make five thousand people hear him, in order to have a success, and that success is one of the ticket office. But the magical charm lies in the natural voice. Every person is gifted; God has given him a certain pitch, a natural note, and if he develops that note it is magic; he can perform a miracle. But today he must think about the hall where he has to sing, and of how loud he must shout.

There was a man from India visiting Paris, and for the first time in his life he went to the opera to hear the music there. He tried hard to enjoy it. The first thing he heard was a soprano doing her best, and then came the tenor or baritone and he had to sing with her. That made this man very annoyed and he said, 'Now look, he has come to spoil it!'

When we come to the essence and inner principle of sound, the closer to nature one keeps it, the more powerful, the more magical, it becomes. Every man and woman has a certain pitch of voice, but then the voice-producer says, 'No, this is alto', 'soprano', 'tenor', 'baritone', or 'bass'. He limits what cannot be limited. Are there then so many voices? There are as many voices as there are souls; they cannot be classified. As soon as a singer is classified he has to sing in that pitch; if his pitch is different, he does not know it. Because the voice-producer has said, 'This is a soprano', then that person cannot be anything else. Besides this, the composer has probably never heard the voice of that particular singer and has written only for a certain pitch, either this one or that one; and when a person has to depend upon what the composer has written and has to sing in a pitch that is thus prescribed, then he has lost the natural pitch he had. But, singing apart, even in speaking you will find among one hundred persons one who speaks in his natural voice and ninety-nine who imitate. They imitate someone else, although they may not know it.

The same thing that you find in grown-up people you will find in little children. The tendency in a child is to change its ways and to imitate. Every five or ten days, every month, a child changes its way of speaking, its voice, its words; it changes many things. And where does the child learn these? It learns them from the children in school. It sees a child walking in some way or making gestures or frowning or speaking in a certain way. The child does not realize it, but it has heard or seen it and then it does the same thing; and so it goes on changing.

In the same way every person, also without realizing it, changes his voice; and by that the natural voice is lost. To retain one's natural voice is a great power in itself; but one cannot retain it always. In order to obtain a powerful or good effect of one's voice and sound, one need not be a singer. What one has to do is to practise the science of breath in different ways. One must first know how to breathe, then one must know how to blow, and then one must learn how to make a sound, how to say a word. If one practises in these three ways, one will attain to that power which is latent in every soul. One need not be a singer, but for every person it is necessary that he should give some part of his day, even the shortest time he can give, five or ten or fifteen minutes, to his voice, to the development of his voice.

CHAPTER IX

THE VOICE

THE voice is not only indicative of man's character, but it is the expression of his spirit. The voice is not only audible, but also visible, to those who can see it; the voice makes impressions on the ethereal spheres, impressions which can be called audible but are visible at the same time. On all planes the voice makes an impression, and those scientists who have made experiments with sound and have taken impressions of sound on plates will find one day that the impression of the voice is more living, more deep, and has a greater effect than any other sound. Other sounds can be louder than the voice, but no sound can be more living. Knowing this, the Hindus of ancient times said that singing was the first art, playing the second art and dancing the third art which make music. Having found out that by these three different aspects of music one attains spirituality much sooner than by any other way, the Hindus discovered that the shortest way to attain to spiritual heights is by singing. Therefore the greatest prophets of the Hindus were singers, like Narada and Tumbara. Narada inspired Valmiki, who wrote the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the great Hindu scriptures.

There are three principal kinds of voices: the Jelal voice, the Jemal voice, and the Kemal voice. The Jelal voice indicates power; the Jemal voice indicates beauty; the Kemal voice indicates wisdom. If you take careful notice in everyday life, you will find that sometimes, before a person has finished his sentence, you have become annoyed. It is not because of what he has said, but it is his voice. And you will also notice, perhaps not every day in your life but sometimes, that you have heard a person say something only once, and it has always remained with you; giving all the time a beautiful feeling, remaining always soothing, healing, uplifting, inspiring.

A doctor coming to see a patient may frighten him and make him more ill if his voice is not harmonious; and another doctor may, by his voice, treat the patient so that before the medicine is brought he is already feeling better. The doctor gives a medicine, but it is the voice with which he comes to the patient that counts. In the history of the world, have not men marched hundreds of miles with strength and vigour, not knowing what they were going to face, on hearing the voice of their commander: 'Quick march!'? It seemed that all fear, all anxiety, were taken away and vigour and courage were given to them as they were going to march. And have you not heard also of commanders who have given the order: 'Fire!' and the soldiers have turned back and fired at them? That is the voice too.

The voice therefore is a wine. It may be the best wine, or it may be the worst liquor. It may make a person ill, or it may uplift him. It is told that Tansen, the great singer of India, performed wonders by singing. Tansen was a Yogi, a Yogi of singing, and he had mastered sound; therefore the sound of his voice became living; and by making his voice living, everything he wanted happened. Very few in this world know to what extent phenomena can be produced by the power of voice. If there is any real trace of miracle, of phenomenon, of wonder, it is in the voice.

There are five qualities of the voice which are connected with the particular character of a person. The earth quality of the voice is hope-giving, encouraging, tempting; the water quality is intoxicating, soothing, healing, uplifting; the fire quality is impressive, arousing, exciting, horrifying, and at the same time awakening. Very often warning is given in the voice of fire quality. The 'tongues of flame' spoken of in the New Testament tell of that voice and the word which was the warning of coming dangers; it was alarming for the people to awaken from their sleep, to awaken to a greater, a higher consciousness.

Then there is the air quality of the voice, which is uplifting, taking one far away from the plane of the earth. The ether quality of voice is inspiring, healing, peace-giving, harmonizing, convincing, appealing, and at the same time most intoxicating. Every Jelal voice, Jemal voice or Kemal voice has one or another of these five qualities predominant in it, and according to that quality it creates effect.

The most wonderful thing in the study of voice is that from the voice you can find out a man's particular evolution, the stage of his evolution. You do not need to see him; just his voice will tell you how far he has evolved. There is no doubt that the character of a person is evident in his voice. And at every age, infancy, childhood, youth and more advanced age, the pitch of the voice changes. Advanced age is an expression of what a person has gained; and so the voice is also indicative of his attainment. As with everything else in a person's life, there comes also a change in the voice with every step forward in spiritual evolution. Every experience in life is an initiation; even in worldly life one takes a step forward; and this experience changes the voice of a person.

There is another wonderful thing to be found in the science of voice: it is that the fortunate person has a different voice from the one who is not so fortunate. If you gather five persons who have really proved to be very fortunate and you listen to their voices, you will find how great the difference is between their voice and the ordinary voice. When you compare the voice of great people, no matter what their line may be, with the voice of others, you will find that there is a difference. But what is meant here is only the speaking voice; in singing it is quite different, because today the art of singing has become as artificial as can be. The whole modern idea is to train the voice and make it different from what it is naturally. The training of the voice does not aim at developing what is natural in it; mostly it aims at bringing into it something which is not natural to it. Therefore, when a person sings according to the method of the day he has a voice which is not his own. He may have great success, he may be audible to thousands of people, but at the same time he is not singing in his natural voice; and you cannot find the stage of his evolution in his voice. The real character of a person is to be found in his speaking voice.

A third thing to be understood is the softness and the loudness of the voice; that there are times when the voice is softer, and others when the voice is louder. That shows the natural condition of the spirit at that particular time, because sometimes the spirit is tender and with the tenderness of the spirit the voice becomes softened; sometimes the spirit is harder and then the voice becomes hardened. In order to scold someone you do not need to affect a hard voice; the voice becomes hard naturally. In order to sympathize with a person, in order to express your gratitude, your love, your devotion, your affection to someone, you do not need to soften your voice; your voice is soft before you can feel it, before you can think about it. This shows that the voice is the expression of the spirit. If the spirit is soft, the voice is soft; if the spirit is hard, the voice is hard; if the spirit is powerful, then the voice has power; if the spirit has lost its vigour, then the voice loses its power.

Inspiration chooses its own voice. And when a speaker has to change his voice in accordance with the hall where he is speaking, then inspiration is lost; because when inspiration begins to feel, 'It is not my voice', it does not come. Then the speaker has to struggle twice: one struggle is that he must speak without inspiration, and the other struggle is that he must be audible to everyone present. That cannot be done.

Nowadays a new method has been developed called elocution. Someone who has learnt elocution can shout as loudly as ten people and everyone will think it wonderful; but what impression does it make? None. Also, a loudspeaker which enlarges the voice twenty times is all right for trade and business purposes; but when you come to life itself, to conversation, and speaking to your friends, it is a different thing. It is an occasion of great psychological significance when one speaks to one person or to many persons, because it has its echo in the cosmos. No word spoken is ever lost. It remains and it vibrates; and it vibrates according to the spirit put into it. If a person makes his voice artificial in order to convince people, it only means he is not true to his spirit. It cannot be. It is better that one is natural in one's speech with individuals and with the multitude rather than that one becomes artificial. Very often people think that when they have to recite they must affect a different voice, become a different being, and they do not want to remain what they are; but there is nothing more beautiful, nothing more convincing and appealing and impressive, than reciting in one's own natural voice.

As to singing, there are certain things that must be retained in the voice. However much the voice may be developed, however great may be its volume, and however far-reaching it has been made by practice, one must yet feel responsible for preserving one's natural voice unharmed through every stage of development. This does not mean that one should not have a far-reaching voice, a voice of a larger volume, or that one should not have a voice with vigour and flexibility. Everything that enriches the voice is necessary and must be developed by practice; but at the same time one should always keep in view that one must not sacrifice the natural quality of one's voice. For every person must know that there is no other voice like his; and if that peculiarity belonging to the voice of each soul is lost, then nothing is left to it. Besides this, every person is an instrument in the orchestra which is the whole universe; and every voice is the music that comes from one of its instruments, each instrument being made distinct and particular, so that no other voice can take the place of that particular voice. If then, with the instrument that God has made and the music that God intended to be played in the world, one does not allow that music to be played and develops a voice which is not one's own, this is naturally a great loss to oneself and to others.

There is a mechanical way to train the voice and a natural way. The mechanical way is from instruments. But there is a natural way which the ancient people used to understand. They recognized the thunder and other sounds of nature, they made the seven notes out of them, and they saw the comparison between the human beings and the notes of nature. That is why in ancient Indian music there are notes which are nature's notes; and the tuning-fork from which these notes can be regulated is the sound of animals.

For those on the spiritual path, thinkers, students, and meditative souls, it is of the greatest importance to know the condition of their spirit from time to time by consulting their voice. It is the barometer. From morning till evening one can watch the weather created by oneself, whether it is warm or cold, or whether it is spring or winter. One's voice is the instrument, the barometer which shows us what is coming; because what will come is the reaction, the result of what is created, and the voice is indicative of it. And those who think still more deeply on this subject will be able, if only they consult their voice, to see how step by step they are progressing in the spiritual path. Every step in the spiritual path brings about a small change. When you study it, you will find by the change in your voice that you have gone so much further, or that you have gone backward again; the voice will tell you.

Another thing which is most wonderful about the voice is that once you have worked with the voice and have cultivated it, and deepened and widened it, you may leave it for months and years; the voice may take a different shape and appearance, but at the same time what you have once developed remains with you somewhere. It is just like a deposit kept in a bank. You have forgotten it perhaps; yet it is there. The day when you touch it again, it will come back in the same way and it will take very little to complete the work.

If the voice has developed a spiritual quality, and one finds later that that quality has been lost, one must not be discouraged or disappointed. One must correct oneself and try to go forward again, and be sorry for having gone backward. But never be discouraged, never be without hope, because it is there, it needs only a little touch. It is just like a candle which has gone out; once you strike a match you can light it again, for it remains a candle just the same. The voice is a light. If the light becomes dim, it has not gone out; it is there. It is the same with the voice. If it does not shine, it only means that it has not been cultivated; you must cultivate it again and it will shine once more.

Sometimes a person comes to you and begins to speak about something, and then he says, 'Hm, hm'; and after speaking a few words he says again, 'Hm, hm'. It may be that he has a cold, but it may be that he has not; why then is he doing this? Because there is something he wants to bring forth from his mind, and it does not come quickly; the same condition that is going on in the spirit is shown in the voice. He wants to say something, but he cannot say it because the mind is not functioning properly and because the voice does not co-operate. If in the mind there is some obstacle, some hindrance, then in the voice there is something hindering aslo.

CHAPTER X

THE MYSTERY OF SOUND AND COLOUR

THE attraction one finds in colour and in sound makes one wonder if there is a mystery hidden behind them, if there is a language of colour and sound which could be learned; and the answer is that the language of colour and sound is the language of the soul, and that it is our outer language which makes us confused as to the meaning of that inner language. Colour and sound are the language of life. Life expresses itself on all the different planes of existence in the form of colour and sound; but the outer manifestations of life are so rigid and dense that the secret of their nature and character is buried underneath.

Why is the world called an illusion by the mystics? Because the nature of manifestation is such that it envelops its own secret within itself, and appears in such a rigid form that the fineness, beauty and mystery of its character are hidden. Therefore the seekers after the truth of life, the students of life, are of two opposite kinds. The one wishes to learn from outward appearance; the other wishes to find out the secret that is hidden behind it. The one who learns from the external gets the knowledge from the external, which we call science; the one who finds out from the within, from what is hidden in this manifestation, is the mystic. The knowledge he gains is mysticism.

The first question that arises in the mind of the intelligent person is: what is it in sound and colour that appeals to man? It is the tone and rhythm of colour as well as of sound which have an influence on the tone and rhythm of our being. Our being is our capacity for the resonance of tone and rhythm which comes from sound and colour; this capacity enables us to be influenced by sound and colour. Thus some have a liking for a certain colour, others have a liking for another colour, and some are attracted to a certain kind of sound. In singing some are attracted to a baritone or a bass voice, others to a tenor or soprano. There are souls to whom the deep sounds of the cello appeal; there are others who are interested in the sound of the violin; some enjoy the sound of the horn and the trombone; and others prefer the flute. What does this show? It shows that there is a certain capacity in our hearts, in our beings, and it depends upon that particular capacity what kind of sound appeals to us.

At the same time it depends upon man's grade of evolution, his character, his nature, whether he is gross or fine; also upon his temperament, whether he has a practical nature or is dreamy, whether he loves the drama of life or whether he is absorbed in the ordinary things of life. According to man's condition, his temperament and his evolution, colour and sound affect him; and the proof of this is that he often changes his fancy in regard to colour. There are times when he takes a fancy to blue or he craves for yellow or for orange. There are some who like deep colours, others like light colours. It all depends on their temperament and their grade of evolution.

Music of every kind appeals to some person; the best or the worst, somebody likes it. Does one not see how children can enjoy themselves with a little tin can and a stick? The rhythm comes within their capacity of enjoyment. Human nature is like that; it takes in everything, from the highest to the lowest. It has such a wide capacity that there is nothing left out. Everything has its place and everything is assimilated by human nature. At the same time there is action and inaction. It is not only the grade of evolution that makes man change his fancy for different colours and tones, but it is also the different colours and tones that help him in his evolution; and they change the speed of his evolution.

Very often man gives such great importance to colour and tone that he forgets what is behind them, and that leads him to many superstitions, fancies and imaginations. Many have fooled simple people by telling them what colour belonged to their souls, or what note belonged to their lives. Man is always ready to respond to anything that can puzzle him and confuse his mind; he is always willing to be fooled. He enjoys it so much when someone tells him his colour is yellow or green, or his note is C, D or F, that he does not care to find out why. It is like telling somebody that Wednesday is his day and Thursday some other person's!

In point of fact all days are ours, all colours are ours. It is man who is the master of all manifestation. It is for man to use all colours and tones; they are at his disposal, for him to make the best use of. It would be a great pity if we were subject to one colour or tone. There would be no life in this; it would be a form of death. The staircase is made for us to ascend, and not to remain standing on one step. Every step is our step, if we could only take it.

Coming to the mystical point of view, the first aspect that makes Intelligence conscious of manifestations is sound; the next aspect is light (colour). The proof of this can be found in the Bible, as well as in the Vedanta. The Bible says, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God'; and it also says that first was the Word and then came the Light.

What is colour? It is an aspect of light. We read in the Vedanta, that the first aspect of the Creator, the source from which the whole creation was made, was sound. In the Qur'an it is said, 'The first command was "Be", and it became'.

In explaining the process of creation all the mystics and prophets and great thinkers of the world, at all periods of history, have given the first place to sound. And the scientist of today says the same. He will speak of rays, atoms, electrons; and after going through all the different atoms of substance he arrives at something he calls movement. Movement is vibration. It is only the effect of movement which we call sound. Movement speaks and we call speech sound when it is audible. When it is not audible, it is because there is no sufficient capacity. But the cause of sound is movement; and movement is always there. This shows that the existence of the movement does not depend upon capacity.

Colour also is movement. And its capacity makes colour concrete to our vision. At the same time, although we may call a colour green or red or yellow, every colour is different to each person; in fine shades of colour people do not see alike because the capacity is different in each of them. The tone is according to the capacity. In other words tones or colours have not got different values, but to us they become different when we sense them or feel them. In relation to us they are different.

The conception of the five elements, which the mystics have always had, cannot be explained in scientific terms, because the mystics have their own peculiar meaning. Although the elements may be called earth, water, fire, air and ether, this must not be taken literally; their nature and character, according to the mystics, are different; but, as words are few, one cannot give other names to these elements, although in Sanskrit we have distinctive words for them. 'Ether' is not ether in the scientific sense; it is capacity. 'Water' is not water as we understand it in everyday language; it is liquidity. 'Fire' is understood differently; it means glow or heat, dryness, radiance, all that is living. All of these words suggest something more than is ordinarily meant by them.

The working of these five elements is distinguished by different colours and sounds. The five elements are represented by sound. In the musical scales or ragas of India and China, the raga of five notes is considered the most appealing; and my own experience is that the scale of five notes is much more appealing than the scale of seven notes. The scale of seven notes lacks some vital influence which the scale of five notes possesses.

There is a relation between sound and colour. In reality they are one; they are two aspects of life. Life and light are one; life is light and light is life, and so colour is sound and sound colour. Only, when sound is colour it is most visible and least audible, and when colour is sound it is most audible and least visible. One can find the unity of colour and sound by studying and practising the science of breath. When one hears something one's first tendency is to open one's eyes, to try to see the colour of it. That is not the way to see it, although colour is a language. The very life which is audible is visible also; but where? It is visible on the inner plane. The mistake is that man looks for it on the outer plane. When he hears music he wants to see the colour before him. Every activity of the outer world is a kind of reaction; in other words a shadow of the activity which is behind it and which we do not see. And there is a difference in time. An activity which may have taken place twelve hours earlier is now visible in colour on the outer plane; this is also the explanation of the effect of dreams on life. Of something that one has seen in a dream at night, one may perhaps see the effect in the morning, or even a week later. This shows that there is some activity which takes place behind the scenes; and it is reflected on the outer life according to how the activities of the outer life are directed.

This is the reason why a seer or mystic is very often able to know beforehand his own condition and the condition of others, what is coming or what has passed, or what is going on at a distance. For he knows the language of sound and colour. And now the question is, on which plane does he know the language of sound and colour? In what way does it manifest to him? One cannot restrict it by a certain law, yet at the same time it follows a certain law. And where does he see it? He sees it in his breath.

Therefore the whole culture of spiritual development is based upon the science of breath. What made the Yogis, the mystics, able to see happenings of the past, present and future? Some law behind creation; a certain working of the mechanism, which is a finer mechanism. And how can it be seen? By opening one's vision to one's self.

According to the mystics there are five capacities of one's being, which may be called five Akashas. The one capacity which everybody knows and is conscious of is what may be called the receptacle of food, the body. And the other which is more or less recognized is the receptacle of the sense, which resides in the sense. And the third capacity is a world in itself, where one is conscious of the finer forces of life, which are working within oneself. They can convey to one a sense of the past, present and future, for the reason that they are clear to one's vision. One sees them.

But you may ask, 'How can someone find out the condition of another?' It is not because he knows more about others, for a person is made to know most about himself; but many are unconscious of the third receptable, that of life. The one who is conscious of this receptacle of life is able to empty the capacity he has and make it possible for the life of another person to reflect upon it. He does it by focusing his mind upon the life of another, and by that he discovers the past, present and future. Only he has to put the camera in the right place. It is exactly like photography.

The plate is there; it is clear because its own capacity is empty; and the black cloth which the photographer puts over the camera and over his own head is concentration. When man has mastered concentration, he becomes the photographer. He can focus all the light upon one spot. It is all scientific when we understand it in this way; it only becomes a puzzle when it is put before us as a mystery. Everything is a mystery when we do not know it; when we know it everything is simple. The true seekers after truth are lovers of simplicity. The right road is simple, clear, distinct. There is nothing vague about it. And the more one follows this path of the mystery of life, the more life is revealed to one. Life begins to express its secret, its nature. What is required of man is an honest following of life's law; nothing in this world is more important than the knowledge of human nature and the study of human life, and this study lies in the study of self. It is the study of self which is really the study of God.

CHAPTER XI

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SOUND AND COLOUR

IT seems that what science realizes in the end, mysticism realizes from the beginning, according to the saying of Christ, 'First seek ye the Kingdom of God and all will be added'. When one hears of the present discoveries about sound and colour from the scientific point of view, one begins by being surprised. One says, 'What! a new discovery, something we have never heard of? It is something quite new.' And yet when you open the Bible, there it says, 'First was the Word, and the Word was God', and if you open the still older scriptures of the Vedanta, you read in their verses that in the Creator there was that word, or that vibration; and when we come to the Qur'an we read there, 'First there was the word "Be" and then it became'. The religions of the world, the prophets and mystics who existed thousands of years ago, knew of these things. Today a man comes with a photographic plate and says. 'Here I have a photograph of sound. This shows how important is vibration and its action upon the plate'. He does not realize that it is something which has always been known, only it has been spoken of in spiritual terms. What has been spoken man does not think about; what is being spoken he thinks is something new. But when we realize, as Solomon has said, that there is nothing new under the sun, we begin to enjoy life, seeing how time after time the same wisdom is revealed to man. The one who seeks truth through science, the one who searches for it through religion, the one who finds it through philosophy, the one who finds it through mysticism, in whatever manner they seek truth, they find it in the end.

Once I was introduced in New York to a scientist who was also a philosopher, and the first thing he said about his accomplishments was, 'I have discovered the soul'. It amused me very much that while all the scriptures, thinkers, mystics and prophets have spoken about it, this man should come and say, 'I have discovered the soul'! I thought, 'Yes, that was the new discovery that we were expecting, something that we never knew'. Such is the attitude of mind today, the childish attitude. When one looks into the past, the present and the future, one sees that life is eternal; and what one can discover is that which has always been discovered by those who seek. Philosophy or science, mysticism or esotericism, will all agree on one point if they touch the summit of their knowledge; and that point is that behind the whole of creation, behind the whole of manifestation, if there is any subtle trace of life that can be found, it is motion, it is movement, it is vibration.

Now this motion has two aspects. And this is because we have developed two principal faculties, sight and hearing. One aspect appeals to hearing, the other to sight. The aspect of movement or vibration which appeals to our hearing is what we call audible, or sound. The aspect which appeals to our sight we call light or colour, and we call it visible. In point of fact what is the origin of all that is visible, all that is audible? It is motion, it is movement, it is vibration; it is one and the same thing. Therefore, those who can see can trace colour even in that which is audible, and which is called sound; and to those who can hear even the sound of colour is audible.

Is there anything that unites these two things? Yes, there is. And what is it? It is harmony. It is not a particular colour which is in itself harmonious or which lacks harmony; it is the blending of that colour, it is in what frame it is placed, how the colour is arranged. In accordance with that it has its effect upon the one who sees. And so it is with sound. There is not any sound which is harmonious or inharmonious in itself; it is the relation of one sound to another sound that creates harmony. Therefore one cannot point out that this or that certain thing is harmony. Harmony is a fact. Harmony is the result of the relation between colour and colour, the relation between sound and sound, and the relation between colour and sound.

The most interesting aspect of this knowledge is how different colours appeal to different people, and how different people enjoy different sounds. The more one studies this, the more one finds its relation with the particular advancement of a man's evolution; for instance one will find that at a certain stage of one's evolution one loved a certain colour and then one lost contact with that colour. With one's growth and evolution in life one begins to like some other colour. It also depends upon a person's condition, whether he is emotional, passionate, romantic, warm or cold; whether sympathetic or disagreeable. Whatever be his emotional condition, in accordance with that he has his likes or dislikes in colours. It is that which makes it easy for the seer, for the knower, to read the character of man even before having seen his face, by only seeing his clothes. His preference for a certain colour expresses what the person is like, and what is his liking. His liking for a certain flower, his liking for a certain gem or jewel, his liking for a certain environment in his room, the colour on his wall, all that shows what a person is like, what is his preference.

And as man evolves spiritually through life, so his choice of colour changes. With each step forward he changes; his ideas about colour become different. There are some to whom striking colours appeal; to others pale colours. The reason is that the striking colours have intense vibrations, and the pale colours have smooth and harmonious vibrations, and it is according to the emotional condition of man that he enjoys different colours.

It is the same with sound. Every person, whether he knows it or not, has a predilection for a certain sound. Although most people do not study this subject and therefore man usually remains ignorant of the idea, yet every person has a special liking for a certain sound. This explains the saying or belief that each person has his note. The fact is that each person has his sound, a sound which is akin to his particular evolution. Besides all the divisions that have been made such as tenor, bass or baritone, each person has his particular pitch and each person has his special note on which he speaks, and that particular note is expressive of his life's evolution, expressive of his soul, of the condition of his feelings and of his thoughts.

It not only has effect upon people to hear certain sounds and to see certain colours, but it also has effect upon animals. Colours have a great effect and influence upon all living creatures, animals or birds or human beings. Without their knowing it the influence of colours works in their lives, turning them to this or that inclination. Once I was visiting a house which had been taken by a certain club, and one of the members told me, 'It is a very great pity, since we have taken this house there is always disagreement in our committee'. I said, 'No wonder. I see it.' They asked, 'Why?' I said, 'The walls are red, they make you inclined to fight.'

A striking colour from all around gives you the inclination to disagree; the emotions are touched by it, and certainly those inclined to disagreement are helped by it. And it is from this psychological point of view that one finds in the East the ancient custom, especially at weddings of a certain colour being chosen for the time of wedding and certain colours for other times and festivities. It all has its meaning; it has a psychological significance at the back of it.

Since both colour and sound are perceived differently, and we have different senses to perceive them, we have made a distinction between visible and audible things; but in reality those who meditate, who concentrate, who enter within themselves, those who trace the origin of life, begin to see that behind these outer five senses there is one sense hidden; and this sense is capable of doing everything which we seem to do or to experience.

We distinguish five external senses. They are five because we know five organs of sense. But in reality there is only one sense. It is that sense which through these five different organs experiences life, and distinguishes life in five different forms. And so all that is audible and all that is visible is one and the same. It is this which is called in Sanskrit Purusha and Prakriti; and in the terms of the Sufis, Zát and Sifat. The manifested aspect is called Sifat, the outer appearance. It is in the manifestation as Sifat that one sees the distinction or the difference between what is visible and what is audible; in their real aspect of being they are one and the same. According to Sufi mystics the plane of existence where they are one and the same is called Zát, that knowledge of the inner existence in which one sees the source and goal of all things.

Colour and sound are a language which can be understood, not only in the external life, but also in the inner life. For the physician and the chemist colour has a great significance. The deeper one goes into the science of medicine and of chemistry, the more one recognizes the value of colour; and that each element and the development or change of each object is distinguishable by the changing of colour. The physicians of old used to recognize diseases by the colour of the face and the body. Even today there are physicians whose principal way of recognizing a man's complaint is from the colour in his eyes, of the tongue, the nails, and the skin. In every condition it is colour which is expressive of man's condition. Also in objects the condition and the change of the object is recognized by the change of colour. The psychologists have recognized the condition of objects by their sound, and of people by their voice. What kind of person a man is, whether strong or weak, what his character is, what his inclinations are, and what his attitude is towards life, all this can be known and understood through his voice.

Colour and sound are not only the language by which one communicates with external life, but also the language by which one communicates with the inner life. One might ask how it is done. The answer is found in certain scientific experiments: special plates are made, and by speaking near such a plate, one makes marks upon it with sound and with vibration; and those marks make either harmonious forms or inharmonious forms. But every person from morning till night is making an invisible form in space by what he says. He is creating invisible vibrations around him and he is thereby producing an atmosphere. Somebody may come into the house and before he speaks you are tired of him, you wish to get rid of him; before he has said or done anything you are finished with him, you would like him to go away; for he is creating in his atmosphere a sound and this sound is disagreeable. There may be another person with whom you feel sympathy, to whom you feel drawn, whose friendship you value, whose presence you long for; harmony is continually created through him. That is a sound too.

If this be true, then it is not only the external signs, but also the inner condition which is audible and visible. Though not visible to the eyes and not audible to the ears, yet it is audible and visible to the soul. We say, 'I feel his vibrations, I feel this person's presence, I feel sympathy, or antipathy towards that person'. There is a feeling; and a person creates a feeling without having said anything or done anything. Therefore a person whose vibration is wrong, without doing or saying anything wrong, creates the wrong atmosphere; and you find fault with him. It is most amusing to see how people may come to you with a complaint: 'I have said nothing, I have done nothing, and yet people dislike me and are against me!' That person does not understand that it is not what he says or does; it is what one *is* which speaks louder than anything one says; it is being. It is life itself which has its tone, its colour, its vibration; it speaks aloud.

One may wonder what it is, and where it is to be found. And the answer is, that what little man knows about himself is only about his body. If you ask someone to say where he is, he will point at his arm, his hand, his body; he knows little beyond that. There are many who if asked, 'But where do you think you are in your body?' will say, 'In my brain'. They limit themselves to that small physical region which is called body, thus making themselves much smaller than they really are. The truth is that man is one individual with two aspects, just like one line with two ends. If you look at the ends, it is two; if you look at the line, it is one. One end of the line is limited, the other end of the line is unlimited. One end is man, the other end is God. Man forgets that end, and knows only the end of which he is conscious; and it is the consciousness of limitation which makes him more limited. Otherwise he would have far greater means of approaching the Unlimited which is within himself; which is only the other end of the same line, the line which he calls, or which he considers to be, himself. And when a mystic speaks of self-knowledge this does not mean knowing how old one is or how good one is or how bad, or how right or how wrong; it means knowing the other part of one's being, that deeper, subtler aspect. It is upon the knowledge of that being that the fulfilment of life depends.

One might ask, 'How can one get closer to it?' The way that has been found, by those who searched after truth, those who sought after God, those who wished to analyse themselves, those who wished to sympathize with life, is one single way; and that is the way of vibrations. It is the same way as of old: by the help of sound they have prepared themselves. They made these physical atoms which had gradually become deadened, live again by the help of sound; they have worked with the power of sound. As Zeb-un-Nissa says, 'Say continually that sacred name which will make thee sacred'. The Hindus have called it Mantra Yoga; the Sufis have termed it Wazifa. It is the power of the word which works upon each atom of the body, making it sonorous, making it a medium of communication between the external life and the inner life.

What one realizes as the first experience of one's spiritual development, is that one begins to feel in communion with living beings; not only with human beings, but with animals, with birds, with trees and with plants. It is not a fairy tale that the saints used to speak with the trees and the plants. You can speak today with them if you are in communication. It was not only the ancient times which were thus blessed with the old blessing; the old blessing is not old today, it is new. It is the same ancient one that was, that is, and that will be; and no privilege was ever limited to any period of the world's history. Man has the same privilege today if he will realize that he is privileged. When he himself closes his heart, when he allows himself to be covered by the life within and without, no doubt he becomes exclusive, no doubt he is cut off from the whole of manifestation, which is one whole and is not divided. It is man himself who divides himself; for life is undivided, indivisible.

And it is opening the communication with external life which makes man wider. Then, he does not say of his friend, 'This is my friend, I love him', but he says, 'This is myself, I love him'. When he has reached this point he can say that he has arrived at the realization of love. As long as he says, 'I feel sympathy with him because he is my friend', his sympathy has not yet been fully wakened. The real wakening of his sympathy is on that day when he sees his friend and says this is himself. Then the sympathy is wakened; then there is the communication within oneself. Man does not close himself only from external life, but also from the inner part which is still more important. That inner part is also sound, that inner part is light; and when one realizes this one knows that language which is the language of heaven, a language which is expressive of the past and the present and the future; a language which reveals the secret and the character of nature, a language which is always receiving and giving the divine Message which the prophets have tried at times to reveal.

CHAPTER XII

THE PSYCHIC INFLUENCE OF MUSIC

IN the field of music there is much to be explored, and the psychological influence of music seems little known to modern science. We are taught that the influence of music, or of sound and vibration, comes to us and touches the senses from without; but there is one question which remains: what is the source of the influence that comes from within? The real secret of the psychological influence of music is hidden in that source, the source where sound comes from.

It is plain and easy to understand that the voice has a certain psychological value, that one voice differs from another, and that every voice expresses its psychological value and has its psychological power. Very often one feels the personality of one who is talking at a distance over the telephone. A sensitive person can feel the effect of the voice alone, without seeing the speaker. And many do not depend so much on words, as upon the voice that is speaking the words. This shows that psychological development is expressed in speaking, and more especially in singing.

In Sanskrit breath is called Prana, the very life. And what is voice? Voice is breath. If there is anything in life, in man's constitution, which may be called life, it is the breath. And the sound of the voice is breath manifested outwardly. Therefore a person can best express himself in song or in what he says. If there is anything in the world that can give expression to the mind and the feelings, it is the voice. Very often it happens that a person speaks on a certain subject with a thousand words, and it has no influence; yet another person who expresses a thought in a few words can make a deep impression. This shows that the power is not in the words, but in what is behind the words; that is, in the psychological power in the voice which comes from Prana. According to its strength it impresses the listener.

The same thing is found in the finger-tips of the violinist, and in the lips of the flute player. According to the influence coming from his thought, the musician produces that influence through his instrument. He may be very skilful, but if his finger-tips do not produce a feeling of life, he will not be a success. Apart from the music he plays there is the value of the Prana or psychological power that he gives to what he plays.

In India there are vina-players who do not need to play a symphony in order to exert an influence, in order to produce a spiritual phenomenon. They only have to take the vina in their hand and strike one note. As soon as they strike one note it penetrates through and through; in striking one or two notes they have tuned the audience. The sound works on all the nerves; it is like playing on the lute which is in every heart. Their instrument becomes simply a source, the response to which is found in the heart of every person, friend and foe alike. Let the most antagonistic person come before a real vina-player, and he cannot keep his antagonism. As soon as the notes have touched that person, he cannot prevent the vibrations which are created in him, he cannot help becoming a friend. Therefore in India such players are often called, instead of musician, 'vina magician'. Their music is magic.

A really musical soul is someone who has forgotten himself in music; just as a real poet is someone who forgets himself in poetry, and a worldly soul is someone who has lost himself in the world. And godly is the soul who has forgotten himself in God. All the great musicians, Beethoven, Wagner, and many others who have left to the world a work which will always be treasured, would not have been able to do so if they had not forgotten themselves in their work. They altogether lost the idea of their own being, and in that way they deepened and became one with the thing they had come to give to the world. The key to perfection is to be found in forgetting the self.

There are different ways of listening to music. There is a technical state, when a person who is developed in technique and has learnt to appreciate better music, feels disturbed by a lower grade of music. But there is a spiritual way, which has nothing to do with technique. It is simply to tune oneself to the music; therefore the spiritual person does not worry about the grade of the music. No doubt, the better the music the more helpful it is for a spiritual person; but at the same time one must not forget that there are Lamas in Tibet, who do their concentrations and meditations while moving a kind of rattle, the sound of which is not specially melodious. They cultivate thereby that sense which raises a person by the help of vibration to the higher planes. There is nothing better than music as a means for the upliftment of the soul.

No doubt the power of music depends upon the grade of spiritual evolution that a person has touched. There is a story of Tansen, the great musician at the court of Akbar. The Emperor asked him, 'Tell me, O great musician, who was your teacher?' He replied, 'Your Majesty, my teacher is a very great musician, but more than that; I cannot call him "musician", I must call him "music" '. The Emperor asked, 'Can I hear him sing?' Tansen answered, 'Perhaps, I may try. But you cannot think of calling him here to the court'. The Emperor said, 'Can I go to where he is?' The musician said, 'His pride may revolt even there, thinking that he is to sing before a king'. Akbar said, 'Shall I go as your servant?' Tansen answered, 'Yes, there is hope then'. So both of them went up into the Himalayas, into the high mountains, where the sage had his temple of music in a cave, living with nature, in tune with the Infinite. When they arrived, the musician was on horseback, and Akbar walking. The sage saw that the Emperor had humbled himself to come to hear his music, and he was willing to sing for him; and when he felt in the mood for singing, he sang. And his singing was great, it was a psychic phenomenon and nothing else. It seemed as if all the trees and plants of the forest were vibrating; it was a song of the universe. The deep impression made upon Akbar and Tansen was more than they could stand; they went into a state of trance, of rest, of peace. And while they were in that state, the Master left the cave. When they opened their eyes he was not there. The Emperor said, 'O, what a strange phenomenon! But where has the Master gone?' Tansen said, 'You will never see him in this cave again, for once a man has got a taste of this, he will pursue it, even if it costs him his life. It is greater than anything in life.'

When they were home again the Emperor asked the musician one day, 'Tell me what raga, what mode did your master sing?' Tansen told him the name of the raga, and sang it for him, but the Emperor was not content, saying, 'Yes, it is the same music, but it is not the same spirit. Why is this?' The musician replied, 'The reason is this, that while I sing before you, the Emperor of this country, my Master sings before God; that is the difference.'

If we study life today, in spite of the great progress of science, the radio, telephone, gramophone, and all the wonders of this age, yet we find that the psychological aspect of music, poetry and art does not seem to develop as it should. On the contrary, it is going backward. And if we ask what is the reason, the answer will be in the first place, that the whole progress of humanity today is a mechanical progress; and this hinders the progress of individualism.

A musician has to submit to the laws of harmony and counterpoint; if he takes one step differently from the others his music is questioned. When in Russia I asked Taneiev, a very great musician, who was the teacher of Scriabin, what he thought of Debussy's music. He said, 'I cannot understand it'. It seems that we are restricted by uniformity so that there is no scope; and you will find the same thing in the medical and scientific worlds. But in art especially, where the greatest freedom is necessary, one is restricted by uniformity. Painters and musicians cannot get their work recognized. They must follow the crowd, instead of following the great souls. And everything that is general is commonplace, because the great mass of the people are not highly cultured. Things of beauty and good taste are understood, enjoyed and appreciated by few, and it is not easy for the artists to reach those few. In this way, what is called uniformity has become a hindrance to individual development.

What is necessary today is that in children's education the psychological value of music should be taught. That is the only hope, the only way in which we can expect better results as time goes on. Children learning music should not only know the music, but they should know what is behind it and how it should be presented.

Of course there are two sides to this question: outward conditions, and the presentation of the art. Outward conditions may be more or less helpful. Music or a song performed before two or three people who are congenial, sympathetic, harmonious, understanding and responsive, brings quite a different vibration, creates a different effect, from the same music or song played before five hundred people. What does this mean? It means that some people are like instruments; when good music is presented before them they respond, they become attuned to it, they are all music. They take a share in the music, and therefore a phenomenon is created. And this phenomenon can reach even the highest ideal that is to be expected of music, which is the realization of the soul's freedom; what is called Nirvana or Mukti in the East, and Salvation in the Christian world.

For there is nothing in this world which can help one spiritually more than music. Meditation prepares, but music is the highest for touching perfection. I have seen wonders happen through the psychological power of music, but only when there were congenial surroundings. Five or six people, a moonlight night, or dawn, or sunset. It seems that nature helps to complete the music, and both work together, for they are one.

If a great opera singer or violin soloist has to play before ten thousand people, with all his ability he cannot touch every soul there. It depends upon the greatness of the artist of course. The greater the artist the more he will reach. But he has to consider what will please his audience, not what will be pleasing to God. When music becomes commercial its beauty is lost, and also much of its value. There was a time in the East when every effort was made by the aristocracy of India to keep the art of music from being commercialized, and they were successful for some time in doing so. Musicians were not paid a fixed sum of money. Their needs were supplied even though they were extravagant. Musicians felt that they should have surroundings of harmony and beauty; they were generous and their doors were always open to others. They were always in debt, but their debts were paid by the king. Besides this the musician was not restricted by a programme; he was left to feel by his intuition what people wanted. He had to decide at the moment he saw them, and as he went on playing or singing he knew more. The chemical effect of the listeners' minds told him what they wanted, and the result was a spiritual feast.

The secret of all magnetism, whether expressed through personality or through music, is life. It is life which charms, which is attractive. What we are always seeking for is life, and it is lack of life which may be called lack of magnetism. And if musical teaching is given on this principle, it will be most successful in its psychological results. It is on the health of the physical body, on thought, on imagination, and on the heart, which is very often cold and frozen, that psychology depends; and it is this life which one expresses through one's finger-tips on the violin, through one's voice when singing.

What the world is seeking, what human souls yearn for, is that life, whether it comes through music, colour, lines, or words. What every one desires is life. It is life which is the real source of healing; music can heal, if life is put into it. There is no great secret about this, if only a person is able to understand the truth in its simplicity. When a person plays mechanically, the fingers running about the piano or violin almost automatically, it may create a temporary effect, but it soon passes. Music which heals the soul is music with a soothing effect. One can produce a soothing effect, or a harsh effect; and this depends not only on the musician, but upon the composer also, upon the mood that has inspired him. A person aware of the psychological effect of music will find it easy to understand what mood the composer was in when he wrote. If he has put life and beauty into his music it will still prove to be beautiful and life-giving, even after a thousand years. No doubt study and qualifications help him to express himself better; but what is really needed is that life which comes from the expanded consciousness, from the realization of the divine Light which is the secret of all true art, and which is the soul of all mysticism.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

THE idea of healing through music really belongs to the initial stage of developing through the art of music; the end of this is attaining through music, or as it is called in the Vedanta, Samadhi.

In the first place, if we saw what is at the back of all the medicines which are used for healing purposes, if we ask what it is in them that heals, we shall find that it is the different elements which constitute our physical being. The same elements are present in these medicines, and that which is lacking in us is taken from them, or the effect which should be produced in our body is produced by them. The vibration which is necessary for our health is created in the body by their power; and the rhythm which is necessary for our cure is brought about by bringing the circulation of the blood into a certain rhythm and speed.

By this we learn that health is a condition of perfect rhythm and tone. And what is music? Music is rhythm and tone. When the health is out of order, it means the music is out of order. Therefore when the music is not right in us the help of harmony and rhythm is very necessary to bring us into a state of harmony and rhythm. This way of healing can be studied and understood by studying the music of one's own life, by studying the rhythm of the pulse, the rhythm of the beating of the heart and of the head. Physicians who are sensitive to rhythm determine the condition of the patient by examining the rhythm of the pulse, the beating of the heart, the rhythm of the circulation of the blood. And to find the real complaint a physician, with all his material knowledge, must depend upon his intuition and upon the use of his musical qualities.

In ancient times, and even now in the East, we find two principal schools of medicine. One which came from the ancient

Greek school through Persia; the other which came from the Vedanta and is founded on mysticism. And what is mysticism? It is the law of vibration.

Good health is induced by understanding the nature of a complaint through the rhythm and tone that can be perceived in the human body, and by regulating the body through rhythm and tone according to one's understanding of their proportions.

Besides this there is another way of looking at it. Every illness apparently has its special reason, but in reality all illnesses come from one reason, from one cause, from one condition; and that is the absence of life, the lack of life. Life is health. Its absence is illness, which culminates in what we call death.

Life in its physical form, as perceived in the physical spheres, is called Prana in Sanskrit. This life is given by food or medicine; or the body is prepared by a certain food or medicine to be able to breathe in this life itself, in order that it may be in better health or may experience perfect health. But this Prana, which also means breath, the central breath, attracts from space all the different elements which are there, as the herbs and plants and flowers and fruits all attract from space the same element which they represent; but all these elements are attracted by the breath. Therefore the mystics, whether from Greece, Persia, or India, have always taken as their basis of spiritual evolution the culture of breath, the science of breath. Even now you will see in the East healers who magnetize water or food or the atmosphere. What is the secret of this magnetism? It is their breath. It is the influence of their breath upon the water or food.

The religious people of India have a ceremony where something like a sacrament is given by a holy person to someone who is suffering; and it is very helpful. Their power of breath is so balanced, so purified and developed, that it attracts all elements, all that one can get from a herb, flower or fruit and even more. Therefore their breath can achieve a thousand times more than what medicine can do. There are healers in the East who whisper some spiritual words; but what is whispering? It is breath again; breath with words directed through it.

There was a physician in Delhi who mostly used this kind of healing-power with his patients, and one day a sceptical friend came to consult him. The physician whispered a few sacred words before the patient and said, 'Now you may go'. This sceptical man said he could not understand how such a method could have any effect on his health, and the physician then did something unusual for him: he offended the man, by speaking very harshly to him. The man became very angry and said, 'How can you, a physician, say such words to me?' The physician said, 'I hardly ever do such a thing, and I only did it to prove something to you. If my words can make you angry and ill, they can also cure you. If words can make one ill and upset, they also have the power to harmonize a patient and to put him into a good condition'.

What is music? According to the ancient Indian thinkers there are three aspects of music: singing, playing and dancing. All three represent rhythm, and all three represent tone in some form or other. And what is the effect of music? The effect of music is to regulate the rhythm of another person, and to tune a person to the music that is being performed.

What secret is there in music which attracts all those who listen to it? It is the rhythm which is being created. It is the tone of that music which tunes a soul and raises it above the depression and despair of everyday life in this world. And if one knew what rhythm was needed for a particular individual in his trouble and despair, what tone was needed, and to what pitch that person's soul should be raised, one would then be able to heal him with music.

One might ask why it is, if music is rhythm, that so often musicians are temperamental and easily disturbed. But is it not beautiful to have a little temperament? Life is unmusical when there is no temperament. A person who does not get angry once in a while does not live. It is human to have all kinds of minor faults; the joy is in overcoming these faults. Music is not all sadness; there are higher octaves and lower octaves. Music is all, music takes in all; that is why music is even greater than heaven.

There was a time in India when music was much used for healing. It was used as healing for the mind, for the character and for the soul, because it is health of the soul that brings health to the physical body. But healing of the physical body does not always help the soul. That is why the material medical science, though it can do good for some time, does not entirely suffice the need of the patient. I do not mean by this that outward treatment is useless. There is nothing in this world which is useless, if we only knew how to make use of it. All things in this world are needed, all things have their benefit and use, if we only know how to use them properly. But if a cure is brought about outwardly, while inwardly the illness remains, sooner or later the illness which is buried in the body will come out and show itself.

Once I met a lady who said she had been to many physicians for the complaint of neuritis. She was temporarily cured, but it always came back, and she asked me for something that would help her. I said to her, 'Is there any person in the world whom you dislike, whom you hate, or whose action is troubling your mind?' She said, 'Yes, there are many people whom I dislike, and especially there is one person whom I cannot forgive'. 'Well', I said, 'that is the neuritis, that is the root of the disease. Outwardly it is a pain of the body; inwardly it is rooted in the heart.'

Often the cause of illness is within, though no doubt many things are caused outwardly. No single rule will cover everything. Undoubtedly, as things have changed in the world and materialism has spread throughout the world, this has influenced things, not only in the West but in the East also. The use of music for spiritual attainment and healing of the soul, which was prevalent in ancient times, is not found to the same extent now. Music has been made a pastime, the means of forgetting God instead of realizing God. And it is the use one makes of things which constitutes their fault or their virtue.

Still, the remembrance of the ancient use of music remains among the poor in India. There are healers there, who have a particular instument of healing on which they play, and the people go to them for healing. And by playing that instrument they arouse some special feeling which had become cold, and that deep feeling which was buried begins to come out. It is really the old way of psychoanalysis. Music helps that patient to express in full the hidden influence which was there, and in this way many people are helped without going to a physician. But it is no doubt a crude way of healing.

Once the Maharaja of Baroda, on hearing that healing could be accomplished through music, introduced concerts in certain hospitals, and the amusing result was that all those who were suffering began to cry out, 'For God's sake, keep quiet! Go away!' That was not the music to soothe them. It only made them suffer more; it was like giving a stone for bread.

In order to give healing through music one must study what is needed, what is wanted. In the first place one must study what the complaint is: what elements are lacking, what is its symbolical meaning, what mental attitude is behind the illness. Then after a close study, one can do a great deal of good to the patient with the help of music.

Even if music were not used as a prescription, particularly intended for a certain illness, the power of illness which has its abode in the heart of man can still be reduced by lifting up his heart, by changing his thought. What brings illness is the thought of illness rather than illness itself. The existence of illness in the body may be called a shadow of the true illness which is held by man in his mind. By the power of music the mind may become exalted so that it rises above the thought of illness; then the illness is forgotten. And you will ask, 'What kind of music can heal man? Is it singing or playing, or music for dancing?' Singing is the most powerful, for singing is living. It is Prana. The voice is life itself. No doubt it is also life which is working through an instrument by the touch; but in singing it is the direct life, the breath touching the heart of the listener. However, behind this voice there must be a heart, charged like a battery with what is needed. And with what is it charged? With what we call love and sympathy, the greatest power there is.

A person who is material, who is struggling for himself from morning till evening, who is seeking his own benefit, who is in trouble, or bitter, who is in the midst of conflict, cannot heal. The healer must be free; free to sympathize, free to love his fellow-man even more than himself.

What teaches this love? Where can one learn it? Where can one get it? The key to this love element is God. And when we look at life today with all its progress, what is lacking? It is God. God is the key to that unlimited store of love which is in the heart of man.

Once a very godly and good-natured housemaid was not able to answer a knock at the door as quickly as it should have been answered, and the lady visitor who was waiting at the door became very impatient and spoke crossly to her. When asked what had happened, the maid was not upset at all; she smiled and said, 'Yes, that lady was very cross with me'. And when she was asked if she knew what was the matter with the lady and what had made her cross, the maid with perfect innocence replied, 'The reason? There was no God!' A beautiful answer. Where God is lacking there is no love. Wherever there is love, there is God. If we interpret rightly, what causes pain and suffering is the lack of life. What is life? It is love. And what is love? It is God. What every individual needs, what the world needs, is God. All we need to attain, all we need to gain, to bless our lives by music, by harmony, by love, by the science of right tuning, by a life of good, is God. This is the central theme of all good.

CHAPTER XIV

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT BY THE AID OF MUSIC

THE word 'spiritual' does not apply to goodness, or to wonder-working, the power of producing miracles, or to great intellectual power. The whole of life in all its aspects is one single music; and the real spiritual attainment is to tune one's self to the harmony of this perfect music.

What is it that keeps man back from spiritual attainment? It is the denseness of this material existence, and the fact that he is unconscious of his spiritual being. His limitations prevent the free flow and movement which is the nature and character of life. Take for instance this denseness. There is a rock, and you want to produce sound from it, but it does not give any resonance; it does not answer your desire to produce sound. String or wire on the contrary will give an answer to the tone you want. You strike them and they answer. There are objects which give resonance; you wish to produce a sound in them, and they respond; they make your music complete. And so it is with human nature. One person is heavy and dull; you tell him something, but he cannot understand; you speak to him, but he will not hear. He will not respond to music, to beauty, or to art. What is it? It is denseness.

There is another person who is ready to appreciate and understand music and poetry, or beauty in any form, in character or in manner. Beauty is appreciated in every form by such a person; and it is this which is the awakening of the soul, which is the living condition of the heart. It is this which is the real spiritual attainment. Spiritual attainment is making the spirit alive, becoming conscious. When man is not conscious of soul and spirit, but only of his material being, he is dense; he is far removed from spirit.

What is spirit and what is matter? The difference between spirit and matter is like the difference between water and ice: frozen water is ice, and melted ice is water. It is spirit in its denseness which we call matter; it is matter in its fineness which may be called spirit. Once a materialist said to me, 'I do not believe in any spirit or soul or hereafter. I believe in eternal matter.' I said to him, 'Your belief is not very different from mine, only that which you call eternal matter I call spirit; it is a difference in terms. There is nothing to dispute about, because we both believe in eternity; and so long as we meet in eternity, what difference does it make, if the one calls it matter, and the other calls it spirit? It is one life from beginning to end.'

Beauty is born of harmony. What is harmony? Harmony is right proportion, in other words, right rhythm. And what is life? Life is the outcome of harmony. At the back of the whole creation is harmony, and the whole secret of creation is harmony. Intelligence longs to attain to the perfection of harmony. What man calls happiness, comfort, profit or gain, all he longs for and wishes to attain is harmony; in a smaller or greater degree he is longing for harmony. Even in attaining the most mundane things, he always wishes for harmony. But very often he does not adopt the right methods. Very often his methods are wrong. The object attained by both good and bad methods is the same, but the way one tries to attain it makes it right or wrong. It is not the object which is wrong, it is the method one adopts to attain it.

No one, whatever his station in life, wishes for disharmony, for all suffering, pain and trouble is lack of harmony.

To obtain spirituality is to realize that the whole universe is one symphony; in this every individual is one note, and his happiness lies in becoming perfectly attuned to the harmony of the universe. It is not following a certain religion that makes one spiritual, or having a certain belief, or being a fanatic in regard to one idea, or even by becoming too good to live in this world. There are many good people who do not even understand what spirituality means. They are very good, but they do not yet know what ultimate good is. Ultimate good is harmony itself. For instance all the different principles and beliefs of the religions of the world, taught and proclaimed by priests and teachers but which man is not always able to follow and express, come naturally from the heart of someone who attunes himself to the rhythm of the universe. Every action, every word he speaks, every feeling he has, every sentiment he expresses, is harmonious; they are all virtues, they are all religion. It is not following a religion, it is living a religion, making one's life a religion, which is necessary.

Music is a miniature of the harmony of the whole universe, for the harmony of the universe is life itself, and man, being a miniature of the universe, shows harmonious and inharmonious chords in his pulsation, in the beat of his heart, in his vibration, rhythm and tone. His health or illness, his joy or discomfort, all show the music or lack of music in his life.

And what does music teach us? Music helps us to train ourselves in harmony, and it is this which is the magic or the secret behind music. When you hear music that you enjoy, it tunes you and puts you in harmony with life. Therefore man needs music; he longs for music. Many say that they do not care for music, but these have not heard music. If they really heard music, it would touch their souls, and then certainly they could not help loving it. If not, it would only mean that they had not heard music sufficiently, and had not made their heart calm and quiet in order to listen to it, and to enjoy and appreciate it. Besides music develops that faculty by which one learns to appreciate all that is good and beautiful in the form of art and science, and in the form of music and poetry one can then appreciate every aspect of beauty.

What deprives man of all the beauty around him is his heaviness of body or heaviness of heart. He is pulled down to earth, and by that everything becomes limited; but when he shakes off that heaviness and joy comes, he feels light. All good tendencies such as gentleness and tolerance, forgiveness, love and appreciation, all these beautiful qualities, come by being light; light in the mind, in the soul and in the body.

Where does music come from? Where does the dance come from? It all comes from that natural and spiritual life which is within. When that spiritual life springs forth, it lightens all the burdens that man has. It makes his life smooth, as though floating on the ocean of life. The faculty of appreciation makes one light.

Life is just like the ocean. When there is no appreciation, no receptivity, man sinks like a piece of iron or stone to the bottom of the sea. He cannot float like a boat, which is hollow and which is receptive.

The difficulty in the spiritual path is always what comes from ourselves. Man does not like to be a pupil, he likes to be a teacher. If man only knew that the greatness and perfection of the great ones who have come from time to time to this world, was in their being pupils and not in teaching! The greater the teacher, the better pupil he was. He learned from everyone, the great and the lowly, the wise and the foolish, the old and the young. He learned from their lives, and studied human nature in all its aspects.

Someone learning to tread the spiritual path must become like an empty cup, in order that the wine of music and harmony may be poured into his heart. When a person comes to me and says, 'Here I am, can you help me spiritually?' and I answer, 'Yes', very often he says, 'I want to know first of all what you think about life or death, or the beginning and the end'. And then I wonder what his attitude will be if his previously conceived opinion does not agree with mine. He wants to learn, and yet he does not want to be empty. That means going to the stream of water with a covered cup; wanting the water, and yet the cup is covered, covered with preconceived ideas. But where have the preconceived ideas come from? No idea can be called one's own. All ideas have been learned from one source or another; yet in time one comes to think they are one's own. And for those ideas a person will argue and dispute, although they do not satisfy him fully; but at the same time they are his battleground, and they will continue to keep his cup covered. Mystics therefore have adopted a different way. They have learned a different course, and that course is self-effacement, or in other words, unlearning what one has learned; and this is how one can become an empty cup.

In the East it is said that the first thing to be learned is how to become a pupil. One may think that in this way one loses one's individuality; but what is individuality? Is it not what is collected? What are one's ideas and opinions? They are just collected knowledge, and this knowledge should be unlearned.

One would think that the character of the mind is such that what one learns is engraved upon it; how then can one unlearn it? Unlearning is completing this knowledge. To see a person and say, 'That person is wicked, I dislike him', that is learning. To see further and recognize something good in that person, to begin to like him or to pity him, that is unlearning. When you see the goodness in someone whom you have called wicked, you have unlearned. You have unravelled that knot. First one learns by seeing with one eye; then one learns by seeing with two eyes, and that makes one's sight complete.

All that we have learned in this world is partial knowledge, but when this is uprooted by another point of view, then we have knowledge in its completed form. This is what is called mysticism. Why is it called mysticism? Because it cannot be put into words. Words will show us one side of it, but the other side is beyond words.

The whole manifestation is duality, the duality which makes us intelligent; and behind the duality is unity. If we do not rise beyond duality and move towards unity, we do not attain perfection, we do not attain spirituality.

This does not mean that our learning is of no use. It is of great use. It gives us the power of discrimination and of discerning differences. This makes the intelligence sharp and the sight keen, so that we understand the value of things and their use. It is all part of human evolution and all useful. So we must learn first, and unlearn afterwards. One does not look at the sky first when one is standing on the earth. First one must look at the earth and see what it offers to learn and to observe; but at the same time one should not think that one's life's purpose is fulfilled by looking only at the earth. The fulfilment of life's purpose is in looking at the sky.

What is wonderful about music is that it helps man to concentrate or meditate independently of thought; and therefore music seems to be the bridge over the gulf between form and the formless. If there is anything intelligent, effective and at the same time formless, it is music. Poetry suggests form, line and colour suggest form, but music suggests no form. It creates also that resonance which vibrates through the whole being, lifting the thought above the denseness of matter; it almost turns matter into spirit, into its original condition, through the harmony of vibrations touching every atom of one's whole being.

Beauty of line and colour can go so far and no further; the joy of fragrance can go a little further; but music touches our innermost being and in that way produces new life, a life that gives exaltation to the whole being, raising it to that perfection in which lies the fulfilment of man's life.

THE POWER OF THE WORD

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CHAPTER I

THE POWER OF THE WORD

WE find in the Bible the words, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God'; and we also find that the Word is Light, and that when that light dawned the whole creation manifested. These are not only religious verses; to the mystic or seer the deepest revelation is contained in them.

The first phrase conveys to us that if anything exists that we can express, we can express it only by what we term *word*. The second phrase explains another aspect of this mystery, which is that to enable the soul, surrounded by the darkness of this world of illusion, to come to the light, first the word was necessary. This means that the original Spirit was concealed in the mystery of the word, and that in the mystery of the word the mystery of the spirit was to be found.

Here is a thought which may be pondered for years; each time with fresh inspiration. It teaches that the first sign of life that manifested was the audible expression, or sound; that is the Word. When we compare this interpretation with the Vedanta philosophy, we find that the two are identical. All down the ages the Yogis and seers of India have worshipped the Word-God, or Sound-God; and around that idea is centred all the mysticism of sound or of utterance. Not alone among Hindus, but among the seers of the Semitic races too, the great importance of the word was recognized. The sacred Name, the sacred Word, were always esteemed in the Jewish religion. Also in Islam, that great religion whose mysticism the West is only beginning to discover, one finds the doctrine of Ismahism which can be interpreted as the doctrine of the mystical word. The Zoroastrians, who had their religion given to them long before the time of Buddha or Christ, and who have lost many of their teachings through the changes of time and conditions, have yet always preserved their sacred words. Sanskrit is now a language long dead, but in the meditations of the Indian Yogis, Sanskrit words are still used because of the power of sound and vibration they contain.

The deeper we dive into the mystery of life the more do we find that its whole secret is hidden in what we call words. All occult science, all mystical practices are based upon the science of the word or sound. Man is a mystery in all aspects of his being; not only in mind and soul, but also in that organism which he calls his body. Man's body, the Sufis say, is the temple of God; and this is not a mere saying or belief, for if man studies his body from the mystical point of view, he will find it to be much more subtle and far-reaching, and much more capable of doing, understanding and feeling, than he believes it to be.

There are faculties of the soul which express themselves through a certain centre in the body of man; and as there are parts of lands that have never become fertile soil because water never reaches them, so it is with these centres when the breath never reaches them. They are intuitive, they are full of peace and balance, they are the centres of illumination; yet they have never been awakened, for man has breathed only in those parts of his body by which he lives and eats and performs actions. He is only half alive if you compare his existence with the fullness of life that can be obtained by spiritual development.

It may be compared to living in a great town and not knowing that there are many beautiful things that one has never seen. As there are many people who travel to distant lands and do not know their own country, so it is with man. He is interested in all that brings beauty and joy, and yet does not know the source of all such things in himself.

Man breathes, but he does not breathe rightly. As the rain falls on the ground and matures little plants and makes the soil fertile, so the breath, the essence of all energy, falls as a rain on all parts of the body. This also happens in the case of the mind; but man can never perceive that part of the breath which quickens the mind; only that felt in the body is perceptible. But to the average man it is not even perceptible in the body; he knows nothing of it except what appears in the form of inhalation and exhalation through the nostrils. It is this alone which is generally meant when man speaks of breath.

When we study the science of breath the first thing we notice is that breath is audible; it is a word in itself, for what we call a word is only a more pronounced utterance of breath fashioned by the mouth and tongue. In the capacity of the mouth breath becomes voice, and therefore the original condition of a word is breath. If we said, 'First was the breath', it would be the same as saying, 'In the beginning was the word'.

The first life that existed was the life of God, and from that all manifestation branched out. It is a manifold expression of that one life; one flower blooming as so many petals, one breath expressing itself as so many words. The sacred idea attached to the lotus flower is expressive of this same philosophy, symbolizing the many lives in the one God. As the Bible says, 'In God we live and move and have our being'. When man is separated from God in thought his belief is of no use to him, his worship is of but little use to him; for all forms of worship or belief should draw man closer to God and that which separates man from God has no value.

What is it that makes a word sacred or important? Is not every word as sacred and important as the other? That is true; but to whom is it sacred? To the pure and exalted souls for whom every word breathes the name of God, but not to the average man. There are souls who are at that stage of evolution in which every word is the sacred Name. But when a teacher gives a method it is not given to the exalted souls but to beginners; and therefore words are selected and given to pupils by the teacher, the Guru or Murshid, as a physician would give a prescription, knowing for which complaint and for what purpose it is given. Hafiz says, 'Accept every instruction thy teacher giveth, for he knoweth which is thy path and where is thy good'.

Great importance is given by mystics to the number of repetitions, for numbers are a science and every number of repetitions has a certain value. One repetition means one thing and a few more may mean something quite different, as in medicine one grain of a drug may heal and ten may destroy life. When Christ commanded to abstain from vain repetitions he was not, as is often thought, referring to the sacred Name as used in worship or religious practices. There was a custom among the Semitic peoples, and it still exists in the East, of the constant use of the name of God by people in the street or market place. They would bring it continually into commerce or business, into quarrels and disputes, and it was against this abuse of the most holy name that Christ was speaking. In repetition lies the secret power; therefore it is a great mistake when people take the ways of spiritual culture lightly as an everyday interest, as a hobby, and learn from a book or from some slight instruction given to them. If they attempt to practise from such knowledge only, they are risking their lives. If a centre which should be awakened at a certain time of a person's evolution should be awakened before that time, it would be a disaster.

There are certain words which attract blessing in life; some attract power, some bring release from difficulties, some give courage and strength. There are words which can heal, others which give comfort and ease, and again others which have even greater effects. Now when a person in need of peace and rest uses words that bring courage and strength he will become even more restless. It is just like giving someone a tonic to cure a high fever.

Then there is another question, namely, what makes a word powerful? Is it the meaning, the vibration, the way it is used or the knowledge of the teacher who teaches the pupil to repeat it? The answer is that some words have power because of their meaning; others because of the vibrations they produce; again others for their influence upon the various centres. And there are some words given by saints, sages and prophets which have come inspirationally from God; in them is all blessing and the mystery of how to acquire all that the soul desires in life. If there exists any phenomenon or miracle it is in the power of words; but those who know of this power and who possess it never show it to others. Spiritual attainment is not a thing to be brought before people to prove that it is real, or as a show.

What is real is a proof in itself; what is beyond all price or value does not need to be made much of before people. What is real is real, and the precious is precious in itself; it needs no explanation nor pleading.

The greatest lesson of mysticism is to know all, gain all, attain all and be silent. The more the disciple gains, the more humble he becomes; and when any person makes this gain a means of proving himself in any way superior to others it is a proof that he does not really possess it. He may have a spark within himself, but the torch is not yet lighted. There is a saying among the Hindus that the tree that bears much fruit bows low.

Words have power to vibrate through different parts of man's body. There are words that echo in the heart, and there are others that do so in the head. And again others have power over the body. By certain words definite emotions can be quickened or calmed. There is also a science of syllables which has its own particular effect.

Wagner did but repeat the teaching of the mystics of the East when he said that he who knows the law of vibrations knows the whole secret of life.

CHAPTER II

THE POWER OF THE WORD (*continued*)

THE mystic who knows the value of the word finds that word first in himself; for the secret of all the knowledge that one acquires in the world, whether worldly or spiritual, is the knowledge of the self. For instance music is played externally, but where is it realized? It is realized within. A good word or a bad word is spoken outwardly, but where is it realized? It is realized within. Then where is the realization of this manifestation, of this creation which stands before us in all its aspects? Its realization is within.

At the same time the error of man always continues. Instead of finding realization within he always wants to find it without. It is just like a man who wants to see the moon and yet looks for it on the ground. But if a man seeks for the moon for thousands of years by looking for it on the earth, he will never see it. He will have to lift up his eyes and look at the sky. And so it is with the man who seeks the mystery of life outside; he will never find it, for the mystery of life is only to be found within. Both the source and the goal are within and it is there that if he seeks he will find.

What is sound? Is it something outside or is it something within? The outward sound only becomes audible because the sound within is going on, and when the sound within is shut off, then the body is not capable of hearing the outward sound. Today man has become so accustomed to external life that he hardly even thinks of sitting down alone. And when he is alone he occupies himself with a newspaper or something else. By always occupying himself with external life, man loses his attachment to the life within. His life becomes superficial, and the result is nothing but disappointment; for in this world there is nothing in the form of sound, either visible or audible, which is as attractive as the sound within. This is because everything that the senses touch, and that is intelligible to the mind of man, is limited in time and effect, and thus makes no effect beyond its own limits.

The mystery of life does not concern only the material plane, but goes much further. This mystery resides also in the breath, for it is the continuation of breath and pulsation that keeps the mechanism of the body going. It seems that the people of ancient times had a greater knowledge of this mystery than those of today. For what is meant by the lute of Orpheus? It means the human body, which is a lute and is meant to be played upon. When this lute is not realized, when it is not understood, when it is not used for its proper purpose, then this body remains without the use for which it was created, and has not fulfilled the purpose for which it was made.

The breath goes much beyond what the scientist knows; he is only aware of the vibrations of the air going out and coming in, and he sees no further. The beating of the heart and head, the pulse, all these things keep a rhythm. Man very rarely thinks about what depends upon this rhythm. The whole of life depends upon it. This breath which one breathes is certainly a secret in itself; it is not only a secret but it is the expression of all mystery, something upon which the psychology of life depends. The science of medicine for thousands of years has largely depended upon finding out the physical complaints of the body by its rhythm and by the breath. Ancient medicine knew that health depended upon the rhythm of vibrations. And now again the time has come when physicians are trying to find out the law of vibrations upon which man's health depends.

If the human body is a lute, then every word man speaks, every word he hears, has an effect upon his body; and it has an effect not only upon the body but also upon the mind. For instance if a person constantly calls himself or hears himself called foolish, he will gradually become foolish even if he was wise; and it is true also that if a man who is simple is constantly called wise, in time he will become wise.

The effect of a man's name has a great deal to do with his life, and very often one sees that a man's name has an effect upon his fate and career; it is because he hears that particular name called so often every day. Does it not happen that a man saying a humorous thing bursts out laughing, and a man saying a sad thing breaks into tears? If that is so, what an effect every word that one speaks in one's everyday life has upon oneself and upon one's surroundings!

One can see by this that the ancient superstition about not speaking an unlucky or an undesirable word has a meaning. In the East a child is always trained to think before it utters a word, for every word has psychological meaning and effect. Very often people reading a poem or singing a song of great love, a song of sorrow or tragedy, are affected by it; and very often their life takes a turn and is affected by it too.

A person who speaks of his illness certainly nourishes that illness. Very often I have heard people say that if a pain exists it must be a reality; how can one deny it? It is amusing to hear them say this, because reality is so far away, and our everyday life is such that from morning till night we do nothing but deny it. If one could only know where the truth lies, what the truth is, if one could only know it and see it, one would understand that in reality all else is non-existent.

When one studies the secret behind this idea, one must admit the power of the word. This is a metaphysical science which should be studied. The depth of the word of each person is very different, and if a person has spoken a hundred words in one day, do you think that every word has the same power? No, the power and effect of any particular word depends upon the state in which that person was. It depends from what depth the word rises, and upon that depends the power and light of that word. For instance, you will always find that the word of a person who has a habit of telling a lie and is insincere, has no force; and the word of the one who speaks with conviction, who is sincere and who tells the truth, has strength. His word has light, his word penetrates. Sometimes a person's voice is full of sadness and heartbroken; his word is full of sincerity, and it has all the power to penetrate; such is its effect upon the listener. Then there is the person who is light-headed, who is not deep, who is not serious enough in life; everything he says and does is always on the surface. He inspires no one with confidence, for he himself has no confidence.

Besides this the word will have power according to the illumination of the soul, and then that word does not come from the human mind; that word comes from the depth, from some mysterious part that is hidden from the human mind. And it is in connection with such words that one reads in the scriptures phrases such as 'swords of flame' or 'tongues of flame'. Whether it was a poet or whether it was a prophet, when that word came from his burning heart then it rose as a burning flame. In accordance with the divine spirit which is in the word, that word has life, power and inspiration. Think of the living words of ancient times; think of the living words that one reads in the scriptures, the living words of the holy ones, the illuminated ones; they live and will live forever. It is a music which may be called magic and a magic for all times. Whenever such words are repeated they have that same magic and that power.

Those words which the illuminated souls of all ages have spoken have been preserved by their pupils. In whatever part of the world these sages were born or lived, what they have let fall as words has been gathered up like real pearls, and has been kept as a scripture. And therefore, wherever one goes in the East, one finds that the followers of the various religions use the words of the illuminated ones whenever they pray, and they do not need to put them into their own language. Words spoken by the great ones have been preserved for ages in order that they might be used for meditation.

There is a still more scientific and greater mystery of the word. It is not only what the word means, it is not only who has spoken the word, but the very word in itself has also a dynamic power. The mystics, sages and seekers of all ages, knowing the mystery of the sacred word, have always been in pursuit of it. The whole meditative life of the Sufis is built upon the mystery of the word. For the word 'Sufi', according to the explanation of the initiates, is connected with 'Sophia', which means wisdom; but not wisdom in the outer sense of the word, because worldly cleverness cannot be wisdom. The intellect, which man very often confuses with wisdom, is only an illusion of wisdom. Wisdom is that which is learned from within, and intellect is that which is acquired from without.

Wisdom is a form in which the souls that have come to realization have tried to perceive and interpret to themselves the word they found in life. Wisdom is the interpretation of life, made by someone whose point of view has become different by looking at life in the sunlight. One arrives at this point of view not by study alone, but by association with those who have that particular point of view. Besides, by diving deep into life one comes to the realization of truth, and for diving deep into life there is a way or process. It is possible that either with some difficulty or with ease one finds a place one is looking for in a town; one may look for it in different directions and at last find it; but by asking somebody who knows one can find it sooner.

The source of wisdom is above, the source of intellect is below; and therefore it is not the same method or process which one adopts to attain wisdom as that which one adopts to acquire intellect. In short, though the attainment of that wisdom is achieved in various ways by various people, yet the great mystery of attaining the divine wisdom lies in the mystery of the word.

CHAPTER III

THE POWER OF THE WORD (*continued*)

THE idea of the power of the word is as old as the Vedas of the Hindus; the modern world is now awakening to it through what is called psychology. Through psychology there is a possibility of exploring that ancient treasure which the seekers after truth have developed for thousands of years in the East.

Man today looks at psychology as a side issue and as something that can help medical science. But there will come a day when mankind in this modern world will look upon the science of psychology in the same way that the people in the East have looked upon it: as the main thing in religion and spiritual development.

As to the power of the word, a new idea has been coming from various places under different names, and it is that the repetition of a certain word or phrase is of great help in curing oneself of certain illnesses. Psychology in the Western world is discovering this today; but what about the Buddhists, who for so many centuries have repeated the different Mantras, sitting in their temples, repeating them two thousand, three thousand times a day? And what about the Hindus, who have preserved their age-old sacred Mantras and chants? Even though the language is extinct they have preserved these ancient chants up till now. And what about the Jewish people, who still preserve the sacred songs which they have inherited from the prophets of Beni Israel? And what about the Muslims, who for ages have repeated the Qur'an every day for so many hours, and who still continue to repeat the verses of the same book today? And think of the secret there is behind the repetitions of the Catholic mystics!

The Zoroastrians, the Parsis, whose religion dates from perhaps eight thousand years ago, have still maintained their sacred words, and they chant their prayers several times a day, repeating the same words every day. But modern man, who reads a newspaper today, throws it away and tomorrow he will ask for another newspaper!

No doubt there is great value in the fact that millions of people have been clinging to these Mantras, repeating them day after day perhaps all their life and never becoming tired of doing so. If it were, as it is sometimes called, a religious fanaticism, then nobody could continue those repetitions, as no intoxication can continue longer than its influence lasts; then it goes and a person is disillusioned.

This shows us that beneath the repetition of words a mystery is hidden; and the day when man has fathomed it he will have discovered a great secret of life. One way of understanding this mystery is to keep in mind that as a reflector is needed behind the light in order to direct the light fully, so a reflector is needed for the voice, as every voice-producer knows. The voice-producer will always give exercises to the pupil, to repeat and repeat, in order to get this reflector into the right condition, so that all the possibilities of producing a full voice may be brought out.

That is the material side of the question, but then there is the psychological side of it. This is that not only the organs of the physical body have this quality of reflection, but also the mind, or what we call feeling, can be a reflector. We very rarely explore this question; we cut it short every time we are faced with it. For instance when a person is telling a lie, naturally we feel it is wicked, and we cannot readily believe it. However loud his voice may be, however strongly he emphasizes his lie, since it is a lie we feel it is wicked, because psychologically the power of mind must act as a reflector; but in these circumstances it does not act as this person wishes, for his mind is not really behind it.

Also take an ordinary phrase such as 'thank you' or 'I am very grateful to you'; if during the day ten people say it to you, each one of them has a different power of conveying it; because if the reflector is not giving power from behind a person may say a thousand times, 'I am so grateful to you', but it will have no effect.

There is another way of looking at the same question: suppose there is one person who tells you something, and you readily believe it; and there is another person who tells you the same thing perhaps fifty times over, and you do not feel inclined to believe it. What does this show? It shows that we must prepare ourselves before we say anything. It is not always what we say, but how we feel it, how we express it, and what power is hidden behind our expression, what power brings it forth, so that the word may pierce the heart of man.

Then there is the question as to how one can best prepare oneself to utter a certain word effectively. Symbolically speaking, a person may pronounce the same word a hundred times before people and it remains an iron word; he may say it fifty times, and it is a copper word; he may say it twenty times and it is a silver word; but another person may say it only once, and it is a golden word. For instance a certain person may talk and talk and talk, and in order to convince you he may dispute and discuss and argue and bring up a thousand arguments to make you believe him; but the more he wants you to believe him the less he convinces you. Yet there is another person who tells you something perhaps only once, and you cannot help saying, 'Yes, I believe it, I understand it, I am convinced'.

How does one prepare oneself? How does one prepare the reflectors in order to make an impression with the word? Yogis and Sufis have discovered certain practices which produce psychological development. Through these a person becomes naturally more and more sincere and earnest, and everything he says carries that power. Perhaps these practices have no value from the point of view of voice production, but they have very great value from the psychological point of view. The practices referred to are such as concentration, meditation, contemplation and realization.

Regarding ancient words, a student of languages will find that these words can be traced back to one and the same source. The closer you approach the ancient languages the more you will find a psychological significance in them, and the languages of today will seem like corruptions to them. It is surprising how many words in the languages spoken today come from the ancient languages, and many names of persons are derived from them.

In the ancient languages words were formed by intuition.

Modern languages are based on the grammar one learns. Certainly words that have come purely by intuition, and that form a language which is an action and reaction of man's experience of life, are more powerful than the words of the languages we speak today. Thus they have a greater power when repeated, and a great phenomenon is produced when a person has mastered those words under the guidance of someone who understands that path.

Every vowel has its psychological significance, and the composition of every word has a chemical and psychological significance. The Yogis use special words which they repeat in the morning or in the evening, and by this they reach a certain illumination or come to a certain state of exaltation. It is this very science which was called by the Sufis of ancient times Zikr. This means the science of bringing about desirable results by the repetition of the proper words or phrases. A chemist may have all the medicines that exist, but if everyone went and got whatever medicine he liked, though he might cure himself he might also kill himself.

Even more difficult and more responsible is the use of the repetitions of certain psychological words and phrases. It is the physician's responsibility to give a certain person a proper medicine for his condition. In the East one searches for a Guru, or a Murshid as the Sufis call him, who has the experience of psychological prescription; and one takes what the Murshid has prescribed as an instruction. First the Murshid makes a diagnosis of the person's condition, and according to that evolution he prescribes a word or a phrase by the repetition of which that person may arrive at the desired goal. Those who have some experience of voice production will know that in the beginning the teacher does not give any songs; he gives certain words and notes, and a special way of practising by which the voice is developed.

In Sufism there are certain words which are considered sacred, and a person of simple faith will only know them as such; but besides being sacred they have psychological significance, and by repeating them a certain effect is produced.

It is very interesting to observe that science seems to be awakening to the significance of vibrations and their phenomena. The modern systems are not yet very much developed, but the aim is the same: to find out the conditions of the vibrations in the physical body, in order to treat the body in a scientific way.

When we see that similar systems were developed by the ancient mystics and occultists, and tried for thousands of years by numberless people all their life, it is clear that these systems must bring about satisfactory results, and give to many a treasure which has been kept as sacred for centuries by the seekers after truth.

The Sufi Movement has made it possible for the people of the West who wish to reach that treasure, that source, by serious study and practice, to obtain glimpses of the truth which the ancient mystics possessed.

CHAPTER IV

THE POWER OF THE WORD *(continued)*

THERE is nothing more important as a means of raising one's consciousness and nothing that can be of greater use and importance in the path of spiritual attainment than the repetition of the right word. When we look at the old traditions we find that from the time of the ancient Hindu teachers, who lived many thousands of years before Christ, repetition of a sacred word was practised. And so we find that in all the great periods, when a religious reform came to a country, the power of the word was considered to be of immense importance; for instance, at the time when the Jewish religion was given, and also in the early period of Christianity.

Mystical words may be used in different languages, but they do not belong to any one language. Take for example the phrase used in the practice of Zikr. It is found today in the Arabic language and one might think that it came from Arabia. But then it is used in the Persian language also, and one who does not know Arabic might think it comes from Persia. It also exists in the Hindu language and one who does not know of its existence in the other languages might think that it is Hindu. It also exists in the Hebrew language. It consists of the same words which were repeated by Christ himself as his last words. Even those who came before Christ, mystics whose origin was the ancient school of Egypt, also repeated the same phrase. There are sufficient proofs of this fact and during the time of Abraham, who was initiated in the school of Egypt, these words were already in use.

One might ask what it is in a word that helps, and why it helps. In answer to this I would say that there is no expression of life more vital than words; because the voice is an expressive manifestation of breath, and breath is life itself. Therefore the spoken word not only makes an effect upon another person but also upon oneself; and every word one says has its effect not only upon one's body but also upon one's mind and spirit. If one utters a tactless or foolish word it not only offends another, but can prove to be of great disadvantage to oneself.

Often a person in a pessimistic mood or in a disturbed condition may express the wish for death or failure or wish for anything to happen. If he only knew what effects such wishes have he would be frightened. Even in pain, if a person could only refrain from saying, 'I am in pain', he would do a great deal of good to himself. If a person who has met with misfortune would avoid saying, 'I am experiencing a misfortune', it would be a great thing. For when a person acknowledges the existence of something he does not want, he only gives it greater life. And when a person says, 'Oh, I have waited and waited and waited, but my ship never comes', he is keeping his ship back; his ship will never arrive in port. But the one who does not even see the ship but says, 'It is coming, it is coming', is calling it and it will come.

Now what I have said concerns the meaning of the ordinary word. But the mystical word has a far greater value than the word one uses in everyday language. Mystical words have come from three distinct sources: intuitive, scientific and astrological. Intuitive words have come as sudden expressions from God-realized souls. Whatever word or phrase comes from souls which are tuned to the whole universe, is something which has a much greater power than the words in common use. But apart from spiritual people, there may perhaps be someone among our friends or acquaintances whose one word has weight and power; whereas another person may speak a thousand words which only go in at one ear and out at the other. And this is because in one person his mouth speaks, in another person his heart speaks, and yet in another his soul speaks. There is a great difference.

One might ask if it would be possible for a spiritual person to bring forth intuitively a word which has power. The answer is that a soul may become so much in tune with the whole universe that he hears, as it were, the voice of the spheres. Therefore what he says is like the echo of the whole universe. The person who is in tune with the universe becomes like a radio receiver through which the voice of the universe is transmitted. This is the personal aspect.

As to the scientific aspect, a deep study of human anatomy will show that there are delicate nerve centres which can only be affected by certain vibrations, and upon which the equilibrium and health of mind and body depend. Very often people have been cured of illnesses by the use of resounding scientific words, because such words have given to a certain centre the vibration which was needed to give life to it. If one goes deeper into the science of the word one will find that every vowel and every consonant has its own specific effect upon one's mind and body. Very often you will find, before seeing a person, that on hearing his name you get a kind of impression of what that person is like. It shows that a person's name can have a great effect on his character.

The astrological aspect is a very vast subject and it is connected with every art and science. Vowels and words have their connection with astrological science; by using a certain word one evokes a certain planet, either in order to diminish its influence if it is unfavourable, or to increase its power if it is favourable. Therefore in India every name given to a person is given in accordance with Hindu astrological science.

Many holy scriptures give evidence of the power of the words; but where has the knowledge of that science gone, so well known to the prophets of all times? The science of the word has been lost to most of mankind. The reason for this is that man has occupied himself with the things of the earth, and so has lost the ancient art. By losing that great science, that mystical secret, what has the soul attained? The soul has attained an increasing deafness, and this deafness increases as the more material life prevails. Nevertheless in every period there have been some thinkers, some servants of God, working knowingly or unknowingly, to whom it was always clear that the word was lost, which means that the secret of the whole life was lost.

This of course is an exaggeration. The word which exists cannot be lost, but man has lost his capability of knowing, of hearing that word. Man no longer heard the word from the sky; he heard it from the earth. The result was the great awakening and progress of material science. All the great inventions of this time, which are like miracles, have come to great minds which have so to speak communicated with matter; and matter has spoken with them face to face. All these great inventions are the answer from the earth to the communication of these great minds with matter. Thus the word was not lost, but the direction was lost.

Man learns continually from the objective world to make things he can touch and can make intelligible; but he is always disbelieving in matters which are not intelligible. In this way he has become far removed from the main part of life's mystery. Nevertheless, if at any time in the world's history man has probed the depths of life, he has found what he sought by communicating with the inner life, in artistic expression and by communicating with the heavens. And what is that communication? It is the word.

When the Prophet Mohammad felt the need to communicate, he went away from the town and remained in solitude on the top of a mountain; sometimes fasting or standing, and staying there night and day for two or three days. What did he find in the end? He found that a voice began to speak to him, a voice in answer to his soul's cry. His soul so to speak went forth, pierced through all the planes of existence, and touched the source of all things. But how did the answer come and in what form? The answer came from everything; from the wind, the water, the atmosphere, the air; everything was bringing the same answer.

This experience is not limited to a certain person or a certain time. In our everyday life there are times when sadness comes, and it seems as if everything in the world, even the voice of the beasts and birds, causes sadness. Then again comes the hour of profound joy; at that time the sun helps to give joy, and the clouds covering the sun also give joy. The cold, the heat, the friend, the enemy, all help to give joy.

This world to a mystic is like a dome; a dome that re-echoes all that is spoken beneath it. What is spoken from the lips reaches only as far as the ears, but what is spoken from the heart reaches the heart. The word reaches as far as it can, and that depends from what source it has come and from what depth it has risen. The Sufis of all ages have therefore given the greatest importance to the word, knowing that the word is the key to the mystery of the whole life, the mystery of all planes of existence. There is nothing that cannot be accomplished, there is nothing that cannot be known, by the power of the word. Therefore the principal and central theme of esotericism or mysticism is the word.

But what is the word? Is the word just what we speak? Is that the word? No, that is only the surface of the word. Our thought is a word, our feeling is a word, our voice, our atmosphere is a word. There is a saying, 'What you are speaks louder than what you say.' This shows that even when man does not speak, his soul speaks. And how do the fortune-tellers read the future? They hear it. They say that they read it from the lines of the hand, by astrology, or from the actions of men. But what is all this? It is all a word. Because word means expression; expression in voice, in word, in form, in colour, in line, in movement. It is in this that we see that everything is united in the esoteric side of mysticism. Of course many people in the West have said that for them it is very difficult to lead a meditative life in the activity of their world; they have so many responsibilities and occupations. My answer to this is that for that very reason they need more meditation.

I have heard many persons say that they have the greatest desire to give their time and thought to spiritual things, but that because they have not attained to a way of living which would free their mind to attend to these things, they believe they cannot take up anything spiritual. And I see the reasonableness of their argument, because it is quite true that in this world, as life is today, it is difficult to move without money. Material things apart, even in spiritual things one cannot do without money. If I were to give a lecture and I had no room to give it in, it could not be done. And if there were no advertisements in the newspapers no one would know about it and perhaps only two or three persons would be kind enough to come and listen to me. It is therefore natural that a person thinks like this, and he is not to be blamed. But at the same time, when we look at it from a different point of view, we still see that every moment lost in waiting for spiritual attainment is the greatest loss conceivable. And besides one may go on thinking, 'The day will come when I will change my life and yield to something higher, spiritual', and that day will never come. One has to do it today, just now, instead of saying, 'Tomorrow I will do it'. Otherwise one repents.

Life is assimilating, time passes. Hours, months, years slip by before one realizes that they have done so. And to the one who understands the value of time, spiritual attainment comes first. As Christ has said, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you.' I do not say, 'Let everything go in order to pursue spiritual things'. Spiritual attainment does not deprive one of material gains. One has only to keep in mind that spiritual things come first. And in order to become spiritual it is not necessary to give up worldly things or all that is good and beautiful and valuable from the point of view of the material world. Solomon with all his wealth was not less wise. One need not give up all one has in order to become spiritual. If one should think that, it is a great pity. But to wait saying, 'I shall wait, till my ship comes home, then I shall become spiritual', who knows when the ship will come? It is never too late to start on the spiritual path, but at the same time it is never too early. The best thing therefore is that the moment one thinks, 'It is already late, I must begin', one should start and go through all the tests and trials of this path, confident that there is nothing that cannot be accomplished once the spiritual path is taken.

A person may say that he would have to overcome many weaknesses. But the way of getting above weaknesses is by meditation. When there are many responsibilities in life, one's very reason tells one that it is better to meditate and make the responsibilities lighter. It is not getting worried over one's responsibilities that helps one; it is being responsible, but at the same time being strong enough to shoulder one's responsibilities. There are words which are known to the mystics which do not belong to any language, yet the words of many languages seem to have sprung from these mystical words. And it is by the help of these words that one develops two faculties: seeing and hearing. By seeing, I do not mean seeing with the eyes, but penetrating. It is the penetrating quality of seeing that makes man a seer, and which is the real meaning of the word clairvoyance. Nowadays people have misused this word so much that one does not like to use it any more. But then there is no word left in the world which has not been misused. If one were so sensitive about words one would have to reject all language.

By hearing I do not mean listening. I mean responding; responding to heaven or to earth; responding to every influence that helps to unfold the soul. Through the response and the penetration which one gains by the power of the word, in the end one attains the goal; the goal which is the yearning of every soul.

CHAPTER V

THE POWER OF THE WORD (*continued*)

IN all the different languages spoken in the world today one central language can be traced as the mother language. No doubt it is difficult to establish the exact relation between languages, yet the relation between one language and another shows that the human race had one common language to begin with. Some linguists have held that it was the Sanskrit language; there are others who say that before Sanskrit there was another language.

Historians have different opinions, but metaphysics teach us that in the beginning there was only one language of the human race and that from it all the other languages were derived. A historian cannot be a historian if he does not give a name to a language which is supposed to have been the first language; but for a metaphysician this does not matter. It is he alone who really understands and knows for certain that there was only one language. He does not mind if he does not know the name of that language.

This first language was more natural than the languages we know today which are more complicated. Take for instance the language of birds and animals. These languages are not grammatical; they are natural expressions of their real sentiments, of their real needs. And it is by this natural expression that other animals of the same kind understand the warning they give to protect themselves, to leave the place where they are; the warning of death or danger, or of a change of climate, of storm or rain coming. They have a certain way of expressing the affection, passion, wrath, anger they feel at that moment; and yet it is not a mechanical language, it is a natural expression, a natural language.

The primitive language of mankind was also a language of feeling, of natural expression, just like the primitive figures. If we go back thousands of years we find that the name of every object was written as a sort of picture which suggested that object. And now that thousands of years have passed those symbols and forms have changed, and the words of the primitive language have been changed; yet the one who can see into life can trace back at least some forms, sounds and words which came from the original human race. The effect of the original language of humanity was that every word and sound that was expressed not only conveyed a meaning to the mind of the person who said it, but also conveyed a sensation of particular feeling or sentiment to the person who heard it. And as the ancient people cultivated this science they began to understand that sound in the form of voice is the main principle in man's life.

It is the voice of man which shows whether a person is hard or tender, wilful or weak-willed; every characteristic of man can be recognized by his voice. The grade of evolution, his tendency and his condition at that moment can be realized by his voice. This shows that far more than a face or expression or movement, the word can express a feeling or a condition, the real being of man. The central point of his life is to be found in his breath, for voice is only an expression of breath. And when this voice is expressed outwardly, it is in the form of a word. It also has a kind of inward reaction, which again has an effect upon a person's mind, upon his body, upon his soul.

There are certain parts of the human body which may be considered as the factors of the intuitive senses; and when by voice, by word, by breath, those parts are brought into action and are awakened, man begins to experience a fuller life. If that person is an artist, a musician, a writer, or a scientific genius, whatever he is, by cultivating all the natural faculties which are within him he can express his art or his science more fully.

It was with this secret in mind that the ancient people developed the science of Yoga. By the repetition of certain vowels and certain words, and by a particular way of breathing, they touched within themselves those centres which are connected with the intuitive faculties. This was not so only in the past. The school of the Sufis, whose origin was the ancient school of Egypt where Abraham was initiated, still exists; and there are words still used which maintain their ancient power. At the same time these schools have not treated this sacred idea as something ordinary; they have not spread it among people who would abuse it; because if you put a sharp sword into the hands of a child, the consequences will be fatal. If a person who has not yet risen above greed and pride and conceit is given all the power there is, how will he use it? What will he do with it? Therefore in the schools people were first taught moral culture and the attitude they should have towards their fellow-men; for they believed, and they still believe, that any power that is ever attained must be used for one purpose only, and that is drawing nearer to God. If it is not used for that purpose, but for selfish aims, then it is just as well that man remains without powers! It is for this reason that in the ancient schools, which have a long tradition behind them and which are meant to help humanity in drawing nearer to God, initiations are given.

What does initiation mean? Initiation means confidence on the part of the teacher and trust on the part of the pupil. Initiation is not given to the one who is curious and who comes to examine the teacher, or who comes to find out if in a particular method, in a certain cult, there is truth or not. If by any chance such a person received an initiation, he would go through it all and then without finding anything leave by the same door that he had entered. For this treasure house is a magic house; a house wherein is every treasure and yet a thief cannot find it. He will go through the house, he will go all around it, but he will not see anything, and he will go out with his hands empty. For truth is only for the one who is sincere. It is the one who is hungry who must be given food; it is the one who is thirsty who must be given water. He who is not hungry, to him food will do no good; and he who is not thirsty, water will not satisfy his need.

If a person wants to know these things in order to develop magnetic power, to accomplish his ambition, to gain power or influence, or to obtain more than he can get in his daily life, then it is useless. For the word, and especially the sacred word, is the key; and as it is said in the Bible that first was the word, so the last key is also the word. It was the word which was the beginning of creation, and it is the word which opens the mystery of creation. The different centres of intuition, of inspiration, of evolution, are touched by the sacred word.

Scientists have discovered how radio messages can reach through space without any intermediary means, but one day they will discover the truth which has been known to the mystics for thousands of years: that man himself is the instrument, the receiver and the sender of that radio which is above all other kinds of radio. Radio can explain to us many of the possibilities which otherwise are difficult to comprehend; it explains to us that no word once spoken is lost. It is there and it can be caught. This supports what is said above: that the sacred word has such power that nothing, whether distance, space, air or sea, can prevent it from entering and reaching the hearts that can catch it. Only, the difference is that the radio is used by those who communicate between themselves from one country to another; but the mystery of the word is known to those for whom communication between different parts of this world is nothing; their aim is communication between this world and the other world. But although the word was first, there was not at the beginning any specific word; there was only one life and one existence. When we speak of this world and that world, it is for our convenience. It is our speculation; it is our way of distinguishing between the different dimensions. But what in reality is a dimension? A dimension is a conception, and if anything it is a form of existence.

It is the same with time. In reality there is no such thing as time; it is we who have made a certain conception of it. There is only existence; there is an eternal continuity of life. In the same way, what we call this world and that world is really only our conception of all that hides the outer world from our material physical eyes with which we have been accustomed to look at life. But there is only one existence, one life, eternal, everlasting. In short, words can be transmitted by radio from one place to another; this proves to us that if there is only one existence, one life, then in this world or in that world, here or in the hereafter, communication is possible for us; but possible in only one way: through man tuning himself, winding himself as it were to that condition where he lives fully.

Since the world contains so much falsehood, every good thing is imitated and every writing falsified. As there is such a great desire in the people's minds to know something about reality, it seems that many institutions, societies and groups try to speak about things which they themselves do not understand. We could count hundreds of groups today which are trying to bring belief in God by teaching what they call spirit communications. But by doing this they spoil that sacred science, that very great phenomenon which one can only truly realize by attaining to the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORD THAT WAS LOST

THE word that was lost is a symbolical phrase of the mystics which has existed in the East and among the wise for ages. Many spiritual and mystical schools have been formed in order to understand this particular problem; but it is a fact that whoever has solved the problem says very little about it afterwards.

There is an ancient story in the East which tells that there was a wall of mystery. Whenever anyone tried to climb up the wall to look at the other side, instead of coming back he smiled and jumped over and never came back again. So the people of that country became very curious to know what mystery was behind that wall. Once when someone was climbing up the wall to see what was on the other side they put chains on his feet, and held him so that he would not go over. When he looked at the other side, he too was delighted with what he saw and smiled; and those standing at the foot of the wall, curious to know what he had to say, pulled him back. But to their great disappointment he had lost his speech.

The mystery of life has a great charm; every soul is curious about it; but when one wants to explain the mystery of life, words are not adequate. There are many reasons for this speechlessness, for this silence. The first is that the man who has seen what is on the other side of the wall finds himself among children when he returns. To him all the things to which people attach great importance and value seem worthless. For him truth and fact are two different things; for everybody else truth and fact are the same.

The followers of various faiths and religions, those who have different opinions and different ideas, dispute and argue and differ from one another. Do they dispute and differ in the realization of truth? No. All the differences and disputes are caused by the various facts which are all different from one another. There are many facts and one truth; there are many stars and one sun; and when the sun has risen the stars become pale. To the one before whom the sun has risen, to whom the truth has manifested, facts make little difference. The light of truth falling upon the facts makes them disappear.

It is very interesting to observe that there are many people who are both deaf and dumb. This shows that deafness and dumbness are connected, and according to a certain point of view it is the same thing to be deaf as to be dumb. It is just like two ends of one line: when you look at the ends you may say 'deaf' and 'dumb'; when you look at the whole line it is one. In the same way perception and expression are the two ends of one line. In other words, the faculty of speaking and the sense of hearing are the same. If one is lost the other is lost.

The difference between science and mysticism is very slight; it is only that one goes a certain distance, but the other goes further. Considering the idea of creation from a material point of view, a scientist goes as far as realizing that there are certain elements which cause creation and form various objects. When he goes on he goes as far as atoms, molecules and electrons, and then he comes to vibrations; and here he stands still. He says that the basis of the whole of creation must be movement, and that the finest aspect of movement is what is called vibration.

The Vedanta speaks of Nada Brahma, sound-God, meaning that the word or sound or vibration was the creative aspect of God, which shows that the mystic does not differ much from the scientist who says that movement is the basis of the whole of creation. When one finds this similarity between the conception of the scientists of today and that of the mystics, the teachers of ancient times, one begins to agree with Solomon that there is nothing new under the sun. The difference is that the mystics of ancient times did not make a limit called movement or vibration, but they traced its source in the divine spirit.

According to the point of view of a mystic what existed before creation was the perfect Being; perfect, not in the ordinary sense of the word, because in everyday conversation we call many things perfect which are limited, but in the sense of the spirit of the word. The spirit of the meaning of perfection is beyond words. By divine perfection a mystic means the perfection of beauty, wisdom and power; the perfection of love and the perfection of peace. But at the same time where there are eyes there must be an object to look at, to admire; that is how the purpose of the eyes is fulfilled. Where there are ears there must be a sound to be heard in order to enjoy its beauty; therein lies the fulfilment of the existence of the ears. Thus it was necessary for the perfect Being, in order to realize His own perfection, to create a limited perfection of His own Being; and this is accomplished by the One being divided into three aspects. This is really the secret behind the conception of trinity: the seer, the seen and the sight.

It is the work of biology and other sciences to explain in detail the gradual development of creation. But the outline that the mystics of all ages have given is that first there took place the creation of the mineral kingdom, then that of the vegetable, then that of the animal kingdom and lastly that of man. They taught that through this entire process of development there has been a certain purpose that has led creation on to the fulfilment of a certain object. But in studying the whole process, the mineral, the vegetable, the animal kingdom and man, the seer finds something that was missing but which appears as development goes on further. And what is it that was missing? It is expression and perception; and it is this which the mystics have pointed out in their symbolic phrase, *The word that was lost*. And what makes them say that the word was lost? It is that in the beginning there was the word; there was movement, vibration and there was the consciousness of the perfect Being. The rocks were not made, even from a scientific point of view, before manifestation manifested; vibration came first, and afterwards came the rocks. But the difference between the mystical and the scientific point of view is this that the scientist says that from the rock intelligence developed by a gradual process, whereas the mystic says that the rock was only a grade of intelligence; intelligence was first, and the rock came afterwards.

The whole process of manifestation suggests that it is working towards one and the same object. There are two points of view from which to look at it: one is that a mountain will some day turn into a volcano, or a tree will some day bear fruits, and thus the object of its being is fulfilled. The other point of view, which is perhaps more perfect, is that the stones and trees and animals and man are all working towards one object, and that the whole process of creation is working towards it. And what is that purpose towards which every aspect of creation is working? What is it that the woods, the trees are waiting for? What moment? What object? What is it that all animals are seeking for besides food? What is it that is giving importance to every activity of man, and after the fulfilment of each activity draws him on to another? It is one object, but covered under many forms. It is the search after that word, the word that was lost. The further creation develops, the greater is its longing to hear this word.

As there is a gradual process of evolution from the mineral to the human kingdom, so there is also a gradual process from a certain state of human evolution to a state of perfection. What is it that makes man want to hear a word of admiration or a word of praise which satisfies him? What is it that pleases him in hearing the voice, the word, of his friend? What is it that charms him in music, in poetry, and that gives him joy? It is the same word that was lost appearing in different forms.

It seems that in the beginning creation is deaf and dumb; I mean in the beginning of the material creation. And what is it which feels this pain of realizing being deaf and dumb? It is that spirit of perfection which has been perfect in perception and expression. What Jelal-ud-Din Rumi says about the soul in the Masnavi explains the main tragedy of life. Although every man, every soul suffers pain to a certain degree, and every soul will describe the cause of that pain differently, yet beneath the different causes is one cause, and that cause is the captivity of the soul. In other words, that the word has been lost.

Souls at different stages of evolution try to search for this word that was lost in the way in which they are accustomed to search; and ways have been made to search for this word which have become right ways and wrong ways, sins and virtues. For this reason the wise man is tolerant towards all, for he sees that every soul has its own way of following its own purpose; but in the accomplishment of all these purposes there is one purpose, and that is in the finding of the word that was lost.

No soul, however, will find satisfaction unless it touches that perfection which is spoken of in the Bible, 'Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect'. In other words this means that the spirit of God itself has gone through different phases in order to realize this perfection; and although it is limited in comparison with the perfection of God's own Being yet it is intelligible. And the satisfaction is in that.

What explanation can be given of this perfection? What is it? What experience is it? This perfection is what words can never explain, except by saying that the eyes of the soul become open, and that from all sides that word that was lost comes to the ears of the soul. The poets of the East have pictured it in beautiful imagery in stories like that of Rama and Sita. They have described the joy of this perfection as a lover who having lost his beloved has found her again. But no imagery can better explain this idea than the picture of a man who has lost his soul and has found it again.

CHAPTER VII

COSMIC LANGUAGE

THERE are some people who know beforehand the coming of floods, the coming of rain, or a change of weather; all the various changes in nature. What is it that makes them know this? No doubt there are signs which become words for those who can read them; and by those signs they can understand the coming events of nature. For such people these signs are the language of nature; but for those who do not understand them, it is all just gibberish.

What is it that those who know not only astronomy, but also astrology, can see in the movements of the planets and stars concerning people, their past, their present and their future? It is simply that there are signs which indicate the past, present and future just as words would indicate them; and from these they learn of coming events. There are phrenologists who can learn things from the shape of the head. There are also those who understand physiognomy and can read from a face things that no one has ever told them. There are others who know an unimportant science such as palmistry; but even here the signs of the hands speak to them as loudly as the form of a face.

Then there are the natural conditions, such as the mother understanding the language of the little child who is not yet able to speak. Its tears and smiles, and its looks explain to the mother its moods, its pleasures and displeasures, its aspirations and wants. The heart of the lover knows the pleasure and displeasure and the changing mood of the beloved, without one word having been spoken. There are physicians who through their experience of life have become so skilful that before the patient has spoken one word they have already found out what is the matter. There are businessmen in whom business is so engraved that as soon as a person comes to their shop they know whether he will buy or whether he will leave without buying. And what does this show to us? That whatever our walk in life, whatever our profession, our business or our occupation, through it all there is a sense within us which can understand the language spoken without words.

There is also another point which is closely connected with this one; and it is that everything in life is speaking, is audible, is communicating, in spite of its apparent silence. What we call in our every language 'word' is only the word which is audible; what we consider hearing is only what we hear with our ears; for we do not know what else there is to hear. In point of fact there is nothing which is silent; everything that exists in this world is speaking, whether it seems living or not; and therefore the word is not only what is audible to us, but the word is all.

The real meaning of the word is life; and is there anything that is not life, whether silent or not? Take for instance a person not knowing the secret of the planets, their influence, their nature, or their character; what can they tell him? Nothing. He knows that there are planets, and that is all. As far as the science of astronomy goes, a person who has studied it may say that the planets have a certain influence upon the weather and upon the seasons; but the astrologer will perhaps hear the voice of the planets more clearly, and he may say that the planets have also a certain influence upon the individual and on his life. We understand by this that to one the planet does not speak, to another it speaks in whispers, and to another it speaks loudly.

It is the same with physiognomy; to one person a man is a mystery; another knows something about him; and to a third he is like an open book. One physician finds it necessary to make an examination of a patient with all kinds of instruments; another physician likes to ask the patient about his condition; and a third physician just looks at the patient and knows perhaps more about him than the patient himself.

Is it not the same thing with art? We see that one person goes to a picture gallery, looks at different pictures and only notices different colours and lines. He is pleased to look at them and that is all; he knows nothing more about it. There is another person who sees the historical subject of the picture, and he is more interested than the first because the picture has spoken more to him; but there is a third person for whom the pictures are living. The picture which he sees, which he appreciates, communicates with him. He reads in it the meaning which was put into it by the artist; it is revealed to him by looking at it. Therefore, through the medium of the picture, the thought or the ideal of one person is known to another. In the same way to one person music is a noise, or perhaps a harmonious group of notes, a pastime and a kind of amusement. To another it gives some joy, some pleasure; he feels the music that is coming towards him. But there is a third person who sees the soul of the one who is performing the music and who sees the spirit of the one who wrote the music, even if it were written a thousand years ago.

Is not everything communicative? Whether it be in art or science, or in whatever form, life expresses its meaning. If one were only able to understand this one could understand everything. The one who does not understand this will not understand anything; his sense is closed; it is just like being deaf. In the same way his sense of communicating with things has become dull; he does not understand. But if a person does not hear, he should not say that life is not speaking; and in the same way, if a person cannot sense the meaning of life, he should not say that life has no meaning. The word is everywhere, and the word is continually speaking.

By 'word' is not meant a word which is audible to the ears; by word is meant all that is conveyed, that is expressed, and that comes as a revelation; it means all that one hears with one's ears, that one smells with one's nose, that one tastes or touches with the different senses, all that becomes intelligible, that is a word. In other words, life's mission is to convey something, and everything that it conveys is a word, through whichever sense one experiences it.

It is not only upon the five senses, taste, hearing, seeing, smelling and touching that the word depends. We only call them so because we experience them through five different organs; but in reality there is only one sense, a sense which experiences life through the vehicle or medium of the five external senses. As life is experienced through these five different directions, the experience of life becomes divided into five different experiences; that is to say the word or life becomes visible, tangible, audible, and can be smelt or tasted. But besides these five aspects in which we are accustomed to hear the word there is another way of hearing it, independently of the five senses; and this way of hearing the word is called the intuitive way. When you meet someone, whether you are satisfied with him or dissatisfied, whether he has attracted your sympathy or antipathy, you cannot say that by seeing or hearing that person you have recognized him; but you can say that you had a certain impression of him. And this shows that there is a language which is beyond the senses, a language which we are capable of understanding if the one sense is open to a certain degree. Some people have never experienced it; some have experienced it more, and others less. Some are conscious, some are unconscious; but when a disaster is coming, a sorrow, a failure, a success, one generally feels it.

No doubt someone with a tender heart, with great sympathy, with love awakened in his heart, is more capable of experiencing this sentiment. It is this feeling which may be called intuition; something which does not depend upon the senses. A woman feels it more perhaps than a man. Very often a woman says to a man, 'I feel it; I feel that it is going to be a success or a failure', and when he asks her for what reason, as a man is a very reasoning being, she will still only say, 'I feel it'. There is a language that she understands; a man will not hear it.

Then there is another experience. It is not only the experience of spiritual or very advanced people; it is also known to the artist, to the material person, to the inventor. He may not believe it, but the experience comes all the same; it is a sense of how to work out his invention or how to form his system; how to make a plan, how to write his poetry or to arrange something which he wants to arrange. People may attribute the achievements of the great inventors to their having studied mechanics and may feel that it is the result of this which gives them their ability; but there are thousands of students who have studied mechanics yet not every one is an inventor.

The one who really accomplishes something surely accomplishes it by the help of inspiration. One may ask all kinds of artist, a painter, a draughtsman, a singer, a dancer, a writer, a poet, 'Can you always do the work you wish to do as perfectly and as excellently as you are able to sometimes?' The answer will be 'No, I never know when and how it will be done. Inspiration comes, and sometimes I am able to do it. It comes, but I do not know when or where.' A poet may try for six months to write a poem, a poem that his soul is longing for, and never be able to finish it; and yet it is finished in a few minutes if that moment of inspiration comes. The poet cannot imagine how such a thing can come in a few minutes, something which is wonderful and complete in itself, which gives him the greatest satisfaction and which is living. The great musicians too have not generally taken a long time to write their most beautiful compositions, their masterpieces. Much of what took them a long time to write is of less importance; it is what they have written and completed in a few inspired moments which is living and will always live.

It is the same with all aspects of art; creative art depends upon inspiration. Mechanical art may be developed, a person may be highly qualified, but it is a dead art. The only living art is the art which comes from a living source, and that living source is called inspiration. What then is inspiration? Inspiration is the same word which has been spoken of all through this book; it is the hearing of that word which comes from within; and a person hears it and expresses it in the form of line, colour, notes, words or in whatever other form. But the most interesting and wonderful thing is that the same inspiration may come to several persons. It is the same word which is coming to these persons. One is drawing it in the form of a line, another is composing it in the form of notes, another writes it down in words, another paints it as colours. This shows that artistic inspiration, inventive genius, every form in which the meaning of life wishes to express itself, has another aspect besides what we see in the external life. Then what is this inspiration, this word which is the soul of inspiration? It is beauty in itself, energy, wisdom and harmony in itself. It is energy because it gives the greatest joy when expressed by an artist or by an inventor; it is wisdom because it brings an understanding of accomplishment; it is light because the thing that one wants to make becomes clear to one and there is no more obscurity; it is harmony because it is by harmony that beauty is achieved.

There is another form of this which is attained by a greater enlightenment, by a greater awakening of the soul; and this form can be pictured as a person going through a large room where there are all kinds of things exhibited, and yet there is no light except a searchlight in his own hand. If he throws its light on music, on notes and rhythm, the music becomes clear to him; if he throws his light on words, the words become clear to him; if he throws his light on colour, all colours become distinct; if he throws his light on line, all lines in the most harmonious and beautiful form become clearly visible to him.

This searchlight may become greater still and may reach still further. It may be thrown on the past, and the past may become as clear as it was to the prophets of ancient times. It may be thrown on the future; and it is not only a sense of precaution that a person may gain by it, but also a glimpse into the future. This light may be thrown upon living beings, and the living beings may become like open books to him. It may be thrown on objects, and the objects may reveal to him their nature and secret. And if this light were thrown within oneself, then the self would be revealed to him and he would become enlightened as to his own nature and his own character.

It is this form of experience, this way of knowing, which may be called revelation. Through it one accomplishes the purpose of life, or as the mystics have said, the word that was lost is found. Every child is born crying; his crying conveys that he has lost something. What has he lost? He has lost the word. This means that all he sees conveys nothing to him, he knows not what it is. He seems to be lost in a new country where he has been sent; but as he begins to recognize either his mother or those around him, the colours and the lines and all the things of this world begin to communicate with him. He begins to know things with the hands, ears, nose and mouth; and in this way he begins to know the word which is within.

It is this communication which is the sustenance of life. It is not food or drink which keeps man alive; it is this communication through the different senses, to the extent that he understands what they have to say, that makes man live. When we think of our life, when we compare the pain we suffer in our life with the pleasure we have, the portion of pleasure is so small. Besides what little pleasure there is also costs something, and therefore it resolves into pain. If that is the nature of life, how could we live in this life if there were not this communication, if there were not this word which, to greater or lesser extent, we hear from all things and from nature itself?

The fulfilment of this communication is that no wall or barrier stands any more between us, nor between the life within and without. This is the longing of our soul; it is in this that revelation comes; it is in this that lies the purpose of our life.

COSMIC LANGUAGE

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CHAPTER I

VOICES

THE whole of manifestation in all its aspects is a record upon which the voice is reproduced; and that voice is a person's thought. There is no place in the world, neither desert, forest, mountain, nor house, town nor city, where there is not some voice which, once engraved upon it, has continued ever since. No doubt every such voice has its limit: one voice may continue for thousands of years, another voice for several months, another for some days, another for some hours or moments. For everything that is created intentionally or unintentionally has a life; it has a birth and so it has a death; in fact it has a beginning and an end.

One can experience this by feeling the atmosphere of different places. Sitting upon rocks in the mountains one often feels the vibrations of one who has been sitting there before; sitting in a forest in a wilderness, one can feel what has been the history of that place. It may be that there was a city, that there was a house there, that people lived there; and now it has turned into a wilderness. One begins to feel the history of the whole place; it communicates with one.

Every town has its particular voice. It is, so to speak, telling aloud who lived in the town, and how they lived, what was their life; it tells of their stage of evolution, it tells of their doings, it tells of the results produced by their actions. People perceive the vibrations of haunted houses. It is only because the atmosphere is stirred, it is intense; and therefore it is often felt distinctly. But there is no town, there is no place which has not got its own voice.

By this is meant the voice that has been engraved upon it, so that it has become a reproducing record of what has been given to it consciously or unconsciously. Where many people have lived there is a dominating voice, which is more distinct than other voices. But at the same time, as one feels what a composer wishes to convey through the whole music he writes, with all the different instruments, so even the different voices which are going on together make one result; and that result is like a symphony to the person who can hear them together.

A collective thought comes especially when one can perceive it, in a town, in a new city. It is a kind of voice of the past and a voice of the present, a voice of all as one voice; and it has its peculiar and particular effect. The whole tradition is in that voice. One who can hear it clearly feels as if the city is speaking about its past, about its present.

In remote places sometimes the voices have become buried, and there is a kind of overtone which is most gentle and soothing. For the voices have gone, and the vibration remains as an atmosphere. If that place has always been a desert it is still more elevating, because it has its own natural atmosphere, and it is most uplifting. And yet if some travellers have passed through it, it brings their voice to us. Even that is much better than what one perceives and feels in cities, in towns; because in nature man is quite a different person. The more he is in nature, the more what is artificial falls away from him, and he becomes more at one with nature. And therefore his predisposition, which is nature and truth, and which is goodness, all comes up and makes life a kind of dream for him, a romance, a lyric; and even his thought there, as a human thought, begins to sing through nature.

When Abraham returned from Egypt after his initiation into the mysteries of life, he arrived at Mecca; and a stone was set there in memory of the initiation which he had just received from the ancient esoteric school of Egypt; and the voice that was put into it by the singing soul of Abraham continued, and became audible to those who could hear it. The prophets and seers since that time have made pilgrimages to this stone of Ka'ba; the voice continued and is still existing. A place like Mecca, a desert with nothing of interest, where the ground was not fertile nor the people very evolved, where no science or art was cultivated and no business or industry flourished, has had an attraction for millions of people, who only went for one purpose, and that was pilgrimage. What was it and what is it? It is the voice which has been put into the place in a stone. A stone has been made to speak, and it speaks to those whose ears are open.

The thought of a person who is evolved has a greater power than what the thought contains; because the person is the life of that thought, the thought is the cover over that life. Perhaps Abraham would not have been able to engrave any other stone with that impression which he had at that moment, when he came with his first impression after his initiation; perhaps at that time the impression was more intense than at any other time of his life before or after. As he said, 'That stone I set here as a memory of initiation, of God to be understood as One God; that this stone shall remain for ever as a temple'. Abraham was not a rich man; he could not build a temple other than that stone. But that stone has remained for a much longer time than many other temples built with riches.

And this is only one example, but there are numberless examples to be found; for instance, the atmosphere of Benares and the vibrations of Ajmer, where Khwaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti lived and meditated and died. There is the tomb of the saint, and there is a continual vibration going on, a vibration so strong that a person who is meditative can sit there and would like to sit there for ever. It is in the midst of the city, but it has a feeling of wilderness, because in that place the saint sat and meditated on Saut-e Sarmad, the cosmic symphony; and through his hearing that cosmic music continually, there has been produced cosmic music.

The thought of the people coming after would not prolong the thought; it would add to it. For instance, if there is a flute, then the clarionet, the trumpet or the trombone added to it make up the volume of sound; but there is always one instrument which plays the first part. The main voice stands as a breath; and all the other voices attracted to it build around it a form. The breath remains as life. The form may compose and decompose; yet the breath remains as life.

There was a wonderful experience during the lifetime of the Khwaja of Ajmer. To visit this saint a great Master, Khwaja Abdul Qadir Jilani came from Baghdad, who was also an advanced soul. A remarkable meeting took place in Ajmer, both coming together. Now the latter was very strict in his religious observances; and the religious people where he came from would not have music. So naturally in order to respect his belief the Khwaja of Ajmer had to sacrifice his daily musical meditation. But when the time came the symphony began by itself; and everybody began to listen. Khwaja Abdul Qadir felt that music was going on without playing. He said to the saint, 'Even if religion prohibits it, it is for others, not for you.'

Every place where a person sits and thinks a moment on any subject takes up the thought of man; it takes the record of what has been spoken, so that no man can hide his thought or feeling; it is recorded even in the seat he has been sitting on while thinking. And many who are sensitive, by sitting in that place begin to feel it. Sometimes the effect is quite contrary. When a person sits down on a certain seat, the moment he does so he may have a thought quite foreign to him, a feeling which does not belong to him; this is because on that seat there was that thought, that feeling, vibrating. And as a seat can hold the vibrations of the thought for a much longer time than the life of the person who has thought or has spoken, so an influence remains in every place where one sits, where one lives, where one thinks or feels, where one rejoices or where one sorrows; and thus it continues for an incomparably longer time than the life of the person who has spoken or thought.

Also, the ancient people made the tomb of a person where his seat had been, where there was his atmosphere, where he had lived. The tomb was a mark to show that he used to sit there. And very often in India, where cremations take place, they make a seat as a mark of the place where the one who died has produced his vibrations. He may not be buried there; but they have made a mark, just the same.

CHAPTER II

VOICES (*continued*)

THE secret of the idea of a blessing to be found in the holy places lies in this principle, that the holy place is no longer a place; it has become a living being. The prophets having proclaimed for ages the name of God, and the law of the divine Being in the Holy Land makes it still living, and it has attraction for the whole world. They say that on Sa'di's grave roses have sprung up for ages; that his grave has never been without roses. It is credible, for he has written his Rose Garden in the thought of beauty. Although the mortal body of Sa'di has passed, yet the beauty of his thought, once voiced, is still continuing; and if it maintained roses in the place of his burial for centuries it would not be surprising.

Often people wonder why the Hindus, who have such a great philosophical mind and deep insight into mysticism, should believe in such a thing as a sacred river. It is true that it is symbolical; but besides this there is another meaning to it. The great Mahatmas, living on the heights of the Himalayas where the Ganges and Jumna streams rise, which then take different directions till they again unite and become one, is really a phenomenon deep in its symbolism as well as in its actual nature. In its symbolism the rivers begin as one and then turn into duality; and after the two have been separated for many miles they are attracted to one another; and then they meet in a place which is called Sangam, at Allahabad, a place of pilgrimage. This gives us in its interpretation the ideal of the whole of manifestation, which is one in the beginning, dual in its manifestation, and unites in the end. But besides this the thoughts of the great Mahatmas, flowing with the water, combined with this living stream of Ganges, coming into the world. It brought the vibrations of the great ones;

and it spoke as a voice of power, of wakening, of blessing, of purity and of unity to those who heard it.

Those unconscious of the blessing have also been blessed by bathing in the same river. For it was not only water; it was a thought besides, a most vital thought, a thought of power and with life in it. Those who have perceived that, have perceived its secret. For in many poems in the Sanskrit language one reads how in the waves of Ganges and of Jumna the seers heard the voice of the evolved souls, and felt the atmosphere, as a breath-current of those advanced beings coming through the water.

There is a tank in Mecca, a tank from which the prophets of all ages have drunk water. This tank is called Zemzem. They did not only drink water; they received from it what had been put into it, and then they charged it with what they had to give to it. Even now the pilgrims go there and receive the water as a blessing.

In India there is a place where a great healer used to sit, and throughout his life he healed thousands of patients; many he healed instantly. In the same place his grave was made; and till this day people are attracted to his tomb, and many who touch this place, which is called Miran Datar, are healed instantly.

There is a story told in the East of five brothers who were travelling. Each of them was gifted in some way, but when they arrived at a certain place they suddenly found that they had lost their talent. They were confused, disappointed, and they were wondering about the reason of such an experience; until the wisest among them, by the power of concentration, found in the end that it was the effect of the place. The place had lost its life, it was a dead place; and everyone who came there felt as if he had no life in him; the inner life had gone. We see the same happen in land which after having been used for many thousands of years has lost the strength, the vitality of the earth. If externally the land can lose it, then internally also the vitality, the breath of the land can be lost. Often one feels most inspired in one place, in another place most depressed; in one place confused, in another place one feels dull; one finds nothing of interest, nothing to attract one. One may think it is the effect of the weather; but there are places outwardly most beautiful in nature, with a wonderful climate, and yet you do not feel inspired. If an artist is born in a dead country, his talent cannot be developed there. There is no nourishment, his artistic impulse will become paralysed. Even a plant is not sufficient in itself; it must have air; sun, water. Yet a prophet can inspire a dead land by just passing through it.

Jelal-ud-Din Rumi has said centuries ago, that before man fire, water, earth, air, are objects; before God they are living beings that work at His command. The meaning of what Rumi has said is that all objects, all places are as gramophone records: what is put into them they speak; either your soul hears it or your mind, according to your development.

It seems that people are now beginning to believe in what they call psychometry. What is it? It is learning the language that the objects speak; that apart from the colour or form an object has, there is something in that object that speaks to you. Either it belongs to that object or it belongs to the one who has used it; but it is in the object.

Sometimes one may bring an object into the house, and the moment you have brought it, other objects begin to break. As long as the object is there, there is always a kind of loss. It can bring disharmony in the house; it can bring illness; it can bring bad luck. Therefore those who knew the psychological effect that comes from objects always avoided getting old objects, however beautiful and precious; they always bought a new object for their use. Of course one cannot do this with jewels; they often have to be old; but one finds that more than anything else jewels have an effect upon a person, on his character, on his life, on his affairs, on his environment. One may obtain a pearl which could bring good luck of every kind from the moment the jewel has been bought, or it may produce a contrary effect. Very often a person does not think of it, yet the effect is just the same; it is continual.

Besides this there is an effect upon one's health, on one's condition of mind, on one's feeling from what one wears. If it is a jewel, it may have the voice of thousands of years. As old as a jewel is, so much tradition it has behind it; it explains it. Intuitive persons who are sensitive and feeling, can consciously perceive the vibrations of old stones; it seems as if they speak to them. Also with all one gives to another in the form of food or sweet or drink or fruit or flower, one gives one's thought, one's feeling; it has an effect. Among the Sufis in the East there is a custom of giving to someone either a piece of cloth or a flower or a fruit, some grains of corn; and there is a meaning behind it. It is not what is given in that object, but what is given with it.

How little we know when we say, I believe in what I see'. If one can see how the influence works, how thought and feeling speak, and how the objects partake of them and give them to another, how thought and feeling, life and influence, are conveyed by the medium of an object, it is most wonderful.

CHAPTER III

IMPRESSIONS

THERE are many ancient places where one finds stones engraved or roots carved, with artistic designs. Sometimes there are letters engraved on the rock of a mountain, on a stone; letters which today no one can read. And yet one endowed with the gift of intuition can read them from the vibrations, from the atmosphere, the feeling that comes from them. They are engravings outwardly; inwardly they are a continual record, a speaking record which is always expressing what is written upon it. No traveller with intuitive faculties open will deny the fact that in the lands of ancient traditions he will have seen numberless places which, so to speak, sing aloud the legend of the past.

One sees the same in the atmosphere of the trees in the forests, in the gardens, which also express the past, the impressions which have been given to them by those who sat under them. Very often people have superstitions about a tree being haunted, and this one finds very much more in the East. Actually a vibration has been created, consciously or unconsciously, by someone who has lived there, who has taken the shelter of the tree and pondered upon a certain thought, upon a certain feeling, which the tree has taken up, which the tree is expressing. Perhaps the person has forgotten, and the tree is still repeating what has been given to it. For the tree can express the voice that has been put into it more clearly than a rock. In the tropical countries, where in ancient times people used to travel on foot through the forests and woods, and take shelter under a certain tree, all that they thought and felt has been taken up by the tree; and those with intuitive faculties open have heard it more clearly than one would hear it from a living person.

One finds the same thing among the animals, the pet animals who live and partake of thought and feeling through their contact with man. There exists a superstition about horses especially. Those who know are very particular in buying a horse which has good vibrations, besides considering the health and breed of the horse. Very often a horse of a very good breed and perfectly sound may prove to be unlucky. And the reason is that the disappointment of someone who has been riding upon this horse has been left there, recorded upon the heart of the horse. Perhaps the condition of that person is changed, but that which the horse has kept of it is still continuing.

I was myself once very impressed in Nepal by seeing a horse and an elephant which were kept only for the Maharaja of Nepal to ride on; and it seemed as if those two animals were conscious of that rider. You could see from their dignity that they knew that they belonged to the Maharaja. In every movement that the horse would make, in the look that the elephant would give, you could feel the presence of a Maharaja. And not only that, but all that belonged to the Maharaja, as pain or pleasure, as life and expression, all seemed to have been recorded upon the elephant. And the most surprising thing was this: the elephant was not larger than other elephants, and most often it is its size that gives dignity to the elephant; nor was the horse larger than other horses. But the size did not count; it was the spirit, a life that you could see in those animals expressing the feeling they had in their hearts.

This wakens us again to another field of thought, and that is what an association can create in someone, the association of a sad person or of a happy one, of a foolish or of a wise person; the association of a noble-minded person or of one who is low. The associate partakes of the one he associates with and vibrates what he partakes of, and you can almost hear it spoken in the atmosphere of that person, in his expression, in his speech and action. A person, however happy, will have a line of melody of wretchedness if he has associated with someone who is miserable. It continues, it sings its song separate from the whole symphony; it has its peculiar tone; you can always distinguish it. A wise person who has associated with a foolish one has kept a line. It is quite a different melody, it is in a different key, it has a different pitch from his original song. In a person who has associated with someone who is noble-minded, of high quality, in spite of all his shortcomings you will see a line marked, distinctly audible to the hearts that listen.

It is not a thing of little importance to consider association. It is of a great importance from a psychological point of view; it makes all the difference. For a wise person is not always positive against a foolish person, nor is a good person always positive against a wicked one. The one who is positive cannot always be positive; he has his times when he must be negative for a change. And therefore association certainly brings to one that which is received by the contact. Therefore there is a great wisdom in the saying that a person is known by his associates. In the East much thought has been given to it, especially from a spiritual point of view. For those who seek after the spiritual truth the association with friends in the same path is more precious than anything in the world. Everything else comes after; an association is held as the first and most important thing.

Dr. Urmila Sharma Çollection, Varanasi

CHAPTER IV

THE MAGNETISM OF BEINGS AND OBJECTS

IN preparing anything one does not only put one's magnetism in it, but the voice of one's soul is produced in the thing one prepares. For instance, it is not difficult for an intuitive person to find in the food that comes before him the thoughts of the cook. It is not only the grade of evolution that the cook has, but also what the cook is thinking at that particular time, that is produced in it. If the cook is irritated while cooking, if she is grumbling, if she is sighing, if she is miserable, wretched, all that comes before you with the food she prepares. It is the knowledge of this fact which made the Hindus engage as a cook a high-caste Brahmin, whose evolution was great, whose life was pure, whose thoughts were elevated. It is not the custom of the past, it is the custom of today, that a Brahmin who is sometimes the Guru, the teacher, of other castes, may also be the cook. Besides this, in the ancient times when human personality was keenly observed in everything one did, every person, whatever his rank or position in life, was qualified in cooking and preparing dishes for himself and for his friends; and a great mark of appreciation and affection was shown by people who invited some relations or friends to come to their house, by placing before them dishes that they themselves had prepared. It was not the dish, it was the thought that was put into it.

Life at the present time seems to have taken away many considerations of personal character. But whether in the East or in the West, there was a time when the craft of knitting or weaving clothes was known by every little girl; and to give one's brother or sister or beloved or relation some little thing made by one's own hand was the custom. Now a thing is easily bought at the shop; no one knows who has made it, nor whether it was made grudgingly, or with grumbling, or how. Especially at this time when the working man is in revolt, what the workman has put into the objects he has made for you is a question. And in sewing for the one she loves, a thought naturally has gone with every stitch that a girl has made; if it is done with love and affection, every stitch produces a new thought; it completes that living thought of love, thus giving inwardly that help that every soul is in need of.

But then also the wagons, carriages and ships which are used at the risk of man's life, by whom are they made? Who knows what was the condition of mind of the builders of the *Titanic*? Was there a peacemaker teaching them to keep a certain rhythm of mind while making her?

Everything that is made has a magical influence in it. If it is made with a thought quite contrary to what is needed, it only means dangers awaiting the ship, the train, the wagon, the car. Very often without apparent cause you find a boat in danger, something breaking without a substantial reason. In its make-up the thought of destruction has been given. It is working through it; it is something more living than the object itself. So it is when a house is built. The thoughts given to it by the one who was building it, or by those who worked on it, all count.

The thought attached to things is a life-power. But in order to define it, it may be called a vibratory power. In a mystic's conception vibrations may be considered to have three aspects: audible, visible, and perceptible. Now the vibrations put into an object are never audible and visible; they are only perceptible. perceptible to what? To the intuitive faculty of man. But it is not meant by this that the one who lacks intuitive faculty does not perceive it, he perceives it too, but unconsciously. In short, we understand by this that there is a thought attached to all things made either by an individual or by the multitude and that thought will give results accordingly.

The influence put into things is according to the intensity of the feeling. A note resounds according to the intensity with which you strike it. You may strike a note on the piano, and it will continue to resound for so long; and if you strike it with less intensity it resounds for a shorter time. But at the same time it is according to the strength with which you strike and the instrument on which you strike. There may be one instrument the string of which will continue to vibrate for a very long time; there is another instrument whose string will not vibrate for very long, and then it will quieten down. And so it is also according to the medium which you take in striking vibrations, that the effect is made.

In all things there is God; but the object is the instrument, and man is life itself. Into the object a person puts life. When a certain thing is being made, it is at that time that life is put into it which goes on and on like breath in a body. This also gives us a hint that when we take flowers to a patient and we bring a healing thought with them, the flowers convey the thought of healing. And as the patient looks at the flowers, he will receive from the flowers the healing which has been put there. Any eatable or sweet, anything that we take to a friend with a thought of love, may create a harmonious, a happy result with him. Therefore every little thing given and taken in love, with a harmonious and good thought, has a greater value than the object itself. For it is not the object, it is what is behind it. Does it not teach us that it is not always the doing or preparing of things in our everyday life, but that it is giving these things with a harmonious, constructive thought that counts, so that our work may become a thousand times greater in effect and in its real value?

This also teaches us that while doing a certain thing we should be accomplishing something very great if we did it with this attitude, with this idea at the back of it: that we are not making a thing only, but that we are making it so that it lives. Does it not open before us a vast field of work that we could do easily, without much cost or effort? In its results that work could be of a much greater importance than anyone could think or imagine. Is it not at the same time a great blessing to be able to do a thing of great importance without any outward pretence? Even while writing a letter a person sometimes puts into it what words cannot explain; and yet the letter conveys it. There may be one word written with a loving thought behind it; that word will have a greater effect than perhaps a thousand others. Do we not almost hear a letter speaking? It is not always what is written in it; it brings the one who wrote it to us, and what mood he was in, his evolution, his pleasure, his displeasure, his joy and his sorrow; the letter conveys more than what is written in it.

Consider the great souls who have come to the earth at different times; conditions opposed them, and they found difficulties at every move in accomplishing what they wanted to do; yet they have produced the voice, a living voice. That living voice continued long after they had left, and spread in time throughout the whole universe, accomplishing what they had once wished. The effect of that one moment of thought took perhaps centuries to build something, but it was something worth while, something beyond man's comprehension.

If we could only understand what spirit is, we should esteem the human being much more than we do now. We trust man so little, we believe in man so little, we respect man so little, we esteem his possibilities so little. If we only knew what is at the back of every strong and weak soul, we should know that there is every possibility, and we should never under-estimate anyone, nor fail to respect any man in spite of all he may lack; we should recognize that it is the Creator creating through all the different forms; but it is one Creator; and all that is built and prepared and made and composed, is made by that one Being working through this world of variety.

CHAPTER V

THE INFLUENCE OF WORKS OF ART

IN the works of art that have been made, independently of the skill that has been put into them and the ideas they convey to us, there is a feeling in them and behind them. When I was visiting Berlin I saw around the Kaiser's palace statuary; everywhere around was some work of art suggestive of horror, of terror, of destruction. As soon as I saw it I said, 'No wonder things happened as they did, for this statuary was produced beforehand'. A work of art may be beautiful to look at, it may have great skill in it, and yet the mind of the artist is working through it and the effect that the picture has is not what it suggests outwardly, but what it speaks aloud as the voice of its heart. In every picture, in every statue, in every artistic construction one can see this; there is a voice hidden in it, continually telling for what purpose the work of art was created.

Sometimes an artist is unaware of what he is creating. He is following his imagination; he may be working against his own work of art; he may be bringing about an effect which he had not desired for himself or for the person to whom that work of art was to be given. Once I went to see a temple. I could not call that temple beautiful; but it was wonderful, unique of its kind. No sooner did my eyes fall on the colour-scheme and the pictures which stood there as its prominent features, than I was surprised to think how such a temple could possibly have existed so long; it should have been destroyed long ago. And not long after I heard that the temple had been destroyed. The idea is that the constructor of that temple was so absorbed in his scheme that he forgot the harmony of spirit which was to make the plan of it; and so it resulted in failure.

Once a friend took me to see some pictures made by her husband. No sooner did I see them than it brought to me the whole history of the person, how his soul went on through life, the agonies through which it went; the whole thing was expressed in the pictures. And what was the condition of the possessor of those pictures? Nothing but sorrow and depression.

It is better an artist should be afraid of making a work which might produce something undesirable, because then he will be careful; and if he tries to know the effect, then he will know it. It is very easy to enjoy a picturesque idea, but one never stops to think that it is not only the idea that is important, but also what is the outcome of it; is it destructive, is it constructive? For instance in steamers, especially in the Channel, as soon as you go into the cabin the first thing you see is a picture of a person about to sink and putting on his lifebelt. It is the first thing you are impressed with as the first omen. Certainly it is instructive; but it is not a psychological instruction. If there is some instruction needed, it would be better to circulate picture cards after the ship has started, after people are accustomed to it. Also it is more than unwise—one should use some other word for it—to place in a schoolroom or a chapel scenes of death, even of saints and masters; especially in connection with saints and masters who, being immortal, never died.

And so it is with poetry. Among the Hindus there is a psychology of poetry which is taught to the poet before he is allowed to write poetry. For it is not only the rhythm and the swing of mind and thought that is to be expressed; but to write poetry means to construct something, to make something or to mar something. Poetry has sometimes an effect upon the prosperity or the decline of great ones in whose praise it has been made. It has a science attached to it. A person may speak highly of a personality in poetry, yet the construction of words or the idea behind it may be harmful. It does not only harm the person for whom it was made; but sometimes, if that personality is strong, it falls upon the poet, thus destroying him for ever.

One may say, 'Then do not drama and tragedy do harm?' There are many things that harm us, but there are many things which at the same time are interesting. Besides this, there are minds that are more attracted to tragedy than to anything else.

It is natural, because sometimes there is a sore, and that sore feels alive for the moment, a sensation which is perhaps agreeable. It may be called a pain; but at the same time it is an agreeable pain when the sore is scratched. No doubt too much tragedy is not desirable for anybody, but an artistic nature, a person who loves poetry finds something in tragedy. It would be depriving oneself of a great joy not to read Shakespeare. But when people write poetry in connection with some personality, a king or a sovereign or anyone, then it has a direct effect; the poetry of Shakespeare is general. However, a play has an effect, and a serious effect too.

The above is according to the psychological point of view; it is not meant that it is the point of view of the Sufi. For Sufis are very fond of poetry, and their passion for poetry sometimes goes very far in expressing the sentiment of longing, yearning, heartbreak, disappointment. But even that is not psychological; according to psychology it is not right.

And so it is with music. It may be very interesting for a musician to make a kind of a magical music, describing how the flood came and the city was destroyed, and everybody who lived in the city; for the moment it might seem to him an amusement, a queer imagination; but it has its influence.

The most interesting thing is that through art, poetry, music, or through the movements made in dance, a thought or feeling is created, the effect of which is the outcome of the whole action; the art, so to speak, is a cover. And on every plane the cover of that plane is required in order to express the life on the plane. So music is a world; poetry is a world; art is a world. A person who lives in the world of art, he it is who knows art, who appreciates art; and so the person who lives in the world of music knows music, he appreciates music. In order to have an insight into music one must live in it and observe this world more keenly. In other words, it is not sufficient that a person should be musical, and that he should occupy his heart and soul with music; but he must also develop intuition so that he may see more keenly.

How wonderful it is to notice that art in its every aspect is something living, speaking either good or evil. It is not only what meaning one sees in the frescoes in the old houses in Italy and what art is produced in statuary of the ancient times; but these works of art almost speak to you of the history of the past; they tell you of the artist who made them, his stage of evolution, his motive, his soul, and the spirit of that time. This teaches us that unconsciously our thought and feeling are produced in all things we use; a place, a rock, a tree, a seat, in things that we prepare; but in art an artist completes the music of his soul, of his mind. It is not automatic; it is very often a conscious effect, an effect which results in another effect. This shows that it is not enough for us to learn art or to pursue it; but in order to complete it we must understand the psychology of art, through which one accomplishes the purpose of one's life.

CHAPTER VI

THE LIFE OF THOUGHT

GOD is omniscient, omnipotent, all-pervading, and the only Being. This suggests to us that the Absolute is living Being; that there is no such thing as death; that there is no such thing as an end; that every thing, every being, every particle, has a continuity, because life is continuous.

End or death is only a change; therefore every thought that has once crossed the mind, every feeling that has once passed through the heart, every word that is once spoken and perhaps never thought about any longer, every action once done and forgotten, is given a life; and it continues to live. It is just like a traveller who is journeying, and on his way he has some seeds in his hands and throws them on the ground. When the plants grow in that place he never sees them; he just threw the seeds and they are there. The earth has taken them, and the water has reared them, and the sun and the air have helped them to grow.

This life is an accommodation; and in it everything, as thought or word or action or feeling, once given birth, is taken care of and is raised and brought to fruitfulness. One would hardly think that it could be so. One thinks something is spoken and gone, or done and finished with; or it was felt, and now it is no longer there. But it is only a change, a change of which we are conscious. We know of something; and then it is no longer before us, and we think it is gone, but it is there still. It remains and it pursues its course; for it is life, and in everything there is a life. And life lives; and as all is life, there is no death.

No doubt birth and death, beginning and end, are the names of the different aspects of this mechanical working of the whole universe. It is a kind of automatic working that gives us an idea of something beginning and something ending. When you ring the bell the action takes only a moment, but the resonance lasts. It lasts to our knowledge only as long as it is audible; and then it passes on further and it is no longer audible to us; but it exists somewhere, it goes on.

If a pebble thrown into the sea puts the water in action, one hardly stops to think to what extent this vibration acts upon the sea. What one can see is the little waves and circles that the pebble produces before one. One sees only these. But the vibration which it has produced in the sea reaches much further than man can ever imagine. What we call space is a much finer world. If we call it sea, it is a sea with the finest fluid. If we call it land, it is a land which is incomparably more fertile than the land we know. It takes in everything, and it brings it up; it rears it and it allows it to grow; that which one's eyes do not see, one's ears do not hear.

Does this thought not make us responsible for every movement we make, for every thought that we think, for every feeling that passes through our mind or heart? For there is not one moment of our life wasted, if we only know how to utilize our action here, how to direct our thought, how to express it in words, how to further it with our movement, how to feel it, so that it may make its own atmosphere. What responsibility! The responsibility that every man has is greater than a king's responsibility. It seems as if every man has a kingdom of his own for which he is responsible; and a kingdom which is in no way smaller than any kingdom known to us, but incomparably larger than the kingdoms of the earth. This teaches us to be thoughtful and conscientious and to feel our responsibility at every move we make. But every man does not feel this; he is unaware of himself, he is unaware of the secret of life. He goes on like a drunken man walking in a city. He does not know what he is doing, either for himself or against himself.

How can a thought live? In what way does it live? Has it a body to live, has it a mind, has it a breath? Yes. The first thing we should know is that a breath which comes directly from the source seeks a body, an accommodation in which to function. A thought is like a body, that thought which comes from the source as a ray of that spirit which may be likened to the sun.

This makes the thought an entity; it lives as an entity. It is these entities that are called in the Sufi terms *Muwakkals*, which means elementals. They live; they have a certain purpose to accomplish. They are given birth by man; and behind them there is a purpose to direct their life. Imagine how terrible it is if in a moment's absorption a person expresses his wrath, his passion, his hatred; for a word expressed at such a moment must live and carry out its purpose. It is like creating an army of enemies around oneself. Perhaps one thought has a longer life than the other; it depends on what life has been given to it. If the body is stronger, then it lives longer. On the energy of mind the strength of the body of that thought depends.

Once someone asked me what the elementals are like. I answered, 'Elementals look exactly like your thoughts. If you have the thoughts of human beings, then the elementals have human forms; if you have the thoughts of birds, then the elementals have the forms of birds; if your thoughts are of the animals, then the elementals have the form of animals; for elementals are made of your thought.'

Elementals are created by man. When the winds blow, and the storms rage and create all destruction, one looks at it as a mechanical action of nature. But it is not only mechanical action, it is directed by man's feelings, by the intense feelings of human beings. These feelings turn into huge beings, the beings that direct. They push as a battery behind winds and storms and floods and volcanoes. And so it is that those thoughts which call for blessing, such as rainfall, must bring the mercy of God on others. In the East they call the rain the divine mercy. The sunshine when the sky is clear and all other blessings of nature, the pure air that is exhilarating, the spring, good crops, fruits, flowers and vegetables, all these different blessings which come to us from the earth or heaven, are also directed by forces behind them. As the mechanical working of nature raises the vapours to the sky, and they all form together in clouds and cause rain, so the thoughts and feelings and words and actions have their mechanical work to do also; and that work directs the action of the universe. This shows to us that it is not only a mechanical work of nature, but human intelligence mechanically working, directing the whole working of nature.

This gives one the idea that man's responsibility is greater than that of any other being in the world. It is told in the Qur'an that God said, 'We offered our trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they did not dare to receive it; but man accepted our trust.' This trust is our responsibility; not only our responsibility to those around us, to those whom we meet in everyday life, or to the work that we are engaged in, or to the interest that we have in life; but our responsibility towards this whole creation; what we contribute to this creation and whether it is something agreeable to bring about better and harmonious conditions in the sphere, in the world, on the earth. If we do so, then we know our responsibility; if we are unaware of it, we have not yet known the purpose of our being here.

There is childhood, when a child knows nothing. He destroys things of value and beauty owing to his curiosity, his fancy. But when the child is grown-up he begins to feel his responsibility. The sign of maturity is the feeling of responsibility. So when a soul matures, it begins to feel its responsibility. And it is from that moment a person begins his life; it is from that moment that the soul is born again. For so long as the soul is not born again it will not enter the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is here. As long as man is not conscious of his responsibility he does not know the kingdom of God. It is his becoming conscious of his responsibility which wakens him to the kingdom of God in which is the birth of the soul.

Furthermore, in support of this idea there is a word that is used for the God-conscious people in the Sanskrit language; and that word is *Brahman*, creator. No sooner has a soul realized this idea than he begins to know that every moment of his life is creative, either outwardly or inwardly. And if he is responsible for his creation, he is responsible for every moment of his life. Then there is nothing in life that is wasted. Whatever be the condition, however helpless or miserable, yet his life is not wasted; for there is the creative power working through every move that he makes, every thought that he thinks, every feeling that he has; he is always doing something.

There is another word in Sanskrit for Brahman, which is *Duija*, meaning: the soul who is born again. For the moment one has realized all this, then the soul is born again; because one's realization of life is different then, one's plan of life becomes different, one's action becomes different.

Now going a little further, there are souls who sometimes seem to be doing nothing; and a person thinks, 'Yes, they are most spiritual people, I suppose. But what are they doing?' Because what we know about doing is hustling and bustling and being busy all the time. However unimportant, yet something must be done; that is the thought. But when a person is evolved, even if outwardly he may not seem to be doing something, he is doing, and he can do, much greater works inwardly than one can notice outwardly.

There is a story of a *madzub*. A madzub is a person who is not considered as an active person in the world; many think of him as someone who is not quite balanced. In the East there are some who know about such beings, and they have regard for them. There used to be a madzub in Kashmir some centuries ago; and he was allowed by the Maharaja to roam about in the palace and the gardens wherever he wanted to, and he was given a piece of ground where he could dwell. He was allowed to walk everywhere in the Maharaja's gardens. And there was a miniature toy cannon in the garden; and sometimes this madzub used to get a fancy to play with it. He used to take this gun and he would turn it, either to the south, or to the north, or elsewhere; and then he would turn it again and he would make all sorts of gestures, and after making those gestures he would be delighted. It used to seem as if he were fighting; and as if after that fighting, he was now victorious and delighted. And every time he acted this way Maharaja Ranjit Singh used to give orders to his army to prepare for war; and there was success. The war had been going on for many, many years, and it was going slowly and nothing had happened, but every time the madzub played with the cannon, results were achieved.

There was in Hyderabad a madzub whose habit it was to insult everybody, to call people such names that they would go away from him. But still one man dared go there in spite of all the insults. The madzub said, 'What do you want?' He said, 'My case is coming on in the court six days from now, and I have no money, no means. What shall I do?' The madzub said, 'Tell me what is the case about; but tell me the truth.' So the man told him all, and this madzub listened to it; and on the ground he wrote, 'There seems to be nothing in this case, so it must be dismissed'; and he said, 'Go, it is done.' The man went to the court. From the opposite party many barristers and pleaders were there; on his part there were none, because he was a poor man. The judge heard the case from both sides and then spoke the same words that the madzub had written on the ground.

What does it mean? It only explains to us the words Christ has spoken, 'Enter the Kingdom of God': that every soul has in himself a kingdom of God. To become conscious of this mystery of life is to open one's eyes to the kingdom of God; and then whatever one does has a meaning, an influence; it is never lost. If it is not materialized, it does not matter; it is spiritualized. Nothing is gone, nothing is lost here. If it has not been produced on this plane, it has been produced on another plane. But still it reflects on this plane, because there is always action and reaction between both planes. It only means that what one does, if it is not materialized on this plane, is reflected from the other plane on to this plane, and then materialized; that is all. If a person thinks, 'I have not materialized it', it only means that the time and the conditions have not allowed it to materialize. But if it is once sent out, it must ultimately be materialized.

CHAPTER VII

THOUGHT AND IMAGINATION

THE mind has five aspects; but the aspect that is best known is that for which we use the word 'mind'. Mind means the creator of thought and imagination. Mind is a soil upon which, in the form of thoughts and imaginations, plants grow. They live there, although as there is continual fresh growth, those plants and trees which have been created before are hidden from one's eyes, and only the new plants springing up there are before one's consciousness. It is because of this that one does not think much about thoughts and imaginations which are past, nor are they before one; but at the same time, whenever one wishes to find a thought which has once been shaped by one, it is immediately to be found, for it still exists there.

That part which consciousness does not see immediately is called subconsciousness. What is called consciousness remains on the surface, making clear to us that part of our thoughts and imaginations which we have just had and that we are still busy looking at. Nevertheless once a person has had an imagination, a thought, it still exists.

In what form does it exist? In the form which the mind has given it. The soul takes a form in this physical world, a form which is borrowed from this world. So the thought takes a form which is borrowed from the world of mind. A clear mind, therefore, can give a distinct life, a distinct form to the thought; a mind which is confused produces indistinct thoughts. And one can see the truth of this in dreams; the dreams of the clear-minded are clear and distinct; the dreams of those of unclear mind are confused. Besides, it is most interesting to see that the dreams of the artist, of the poet, of the musician, who live in beauty, who think of beauty, are beautiful; the dreams of those whose mind has doubt or fear or confusion are of the same character.

This gives proof that the mind gives a body to the thought; the mind supplies form to each thought, and with that form the thought is able to exist. The form of a thought is not only known to the person who thinks, but also to the one who reflects the thought, in whose heart it is reflected. Therefore there is a silent communication between people, the thought-forms of one person reflecting in the mind of another. And these thought-forms are more powerful and clearer than words. They are very often more impressive than a spoken word, because language is limited while thought has a greater scope of expression.

Imagination is an uncontrolled thought. One might ask if it is good to have a strong imagination. It is good to be strong oneself. If one has strength, then imagination is strong, and thought is strong, and one is strong oneself. Furthermore, a strong imagination means strength going from oneself, reaching out without one's control. Therefore a strong imagination is not always promising; it is strength of thought which is desirable. For what is thought? Thought is self-directed and controlled imagination.

But if thought has a body, is it then bound to a place, or does it spread equally throughout the whole universe? It is a subtle question. In the first place, if a person is in a prison, is his mind also in prison, or can it reach beyond, can it go out of the prison? Certainly it can. It is the body of the man which is in the prison, his mind can reach anywhere. Perhaps a thought produced in the mind-world is made captive by its object or motive, or by its source, or its application in a sphere, within a horizon where it is working out its destiny. Nevertheless it is thought, and it is capable of reaching every part of the universe in a moment's time.

There is another most interesting aspect in studying the nature of mind: that every mind attracts and reflects thoughts of its own kind, just as there is a part of the earth which is more suitable for flowers to grow, and another part of the earth more suitable for fruits, and yet another part of the earth where weeds grow. Thus a reflection that falls from one mind upon another mind only falls upon the mind which attracts it. This is the reason why like is attractive to like. If a robber or a thief goes to Paris, he will certainly meet with a thief. He will easily find out where the thief lives; he will see him at once because his mind has become a receptacle of the same kind of thoughts. As soon as their glances meet there is a communication established; the thoughts are alike.

One sees in everyday life how like attracts like. The reason is that the mind has developed a certain character; and the thought-pictures of that particular character appear in it. And it is so very interesting for anyone who sees this phenomenon in ordinary life, that there is not one moment when he does not see the truth of it.

High minds will always reflect and attract the higher thought. From wherever it comes, it will come to them; it will be attracted by the ground of mind which is prepared for it. An ordinary mind is attracted to ordinary things. For instance, a person who has a habit of criticizing people is very eager to open his ears to criticism, because that is the subject which interests him; his pleasure is there. He cannot resist the temptation of hearing ill of another, because it is most dear to his heart, for he speaks of it himself. To the ears of the person to whom that thought does not belong, it is a foreign note which he does not want to hear. His heart has no pleasure in it; it wants to throw off anything that is inharmonious. Therefore the mind-world is man's kingdom, his property; whatever he sows, that he reaps; for whatever purpose he keeps that property, that is produced in it.

Now going into the deeper metaphysics, what is it that forms the thought-picture? It is a very subtle question. A materialistic scientist will say that there are thought-atoms which group and make the form; joining together they compose the thought-form. And if he wants to make it more objective, he will say that in the brain there are little thought-pictures just like moving pictures, and that moving successively they complete a form. For this person does not see further than his body; and so he wants to find out the secret of the whole of life in his body and in the physical world.

In reality the brain is only an instrument to make thoughts more clear; thought is greater, vaster, deeper, and higher than brain. The picture of thought is made by the impressions of mind. If the mind had had no impressions the thought would not be clear. For instance, a blind person who has never in his life seen an elephant, will not be able to form an idea of an elephant, because his mind has not the form ready to compose at the command of the will. For the mind must know it first in order to compose it. Therefore the mind is a storehouse of all the forms which a person has ever seen. But cannot a form be reflected upon a blind person's mind? Yes, but it will remain incomplete. If a thought is projected on a blind person, he takes only half of it; for he will not have that part which he should take from his own mind, and so he only takes the reflection which is projected upon him. Therefore he has a vague idea of the thing, but he cannot make it clear to himself, because his mind has not yet formed that idea.

The form of a thought which the mind holds is reflected upon the brain. The brain may be likened to a photographic plate. The thought falls upon the brain just as a reflection falls upon the photographic plate; both one's own thought and the thought of another. But there is another process, and that is that the thought is developed like the photographic plate. And what is it developed with? Is there some solution in which the photographic plate is to be put? Yes, and that is the intelligence; through one's own intelligence it is developed and made more clear to the inner senses. By inner senses is meant the inner part of the five senses. For outwardly it is these five organs which give us an idea of five senses, but in reality there is only one sense. Through five different outer organs we experience different things, and this gives us the idea of five senses.

There are visionary people who have conceptions of the different colours of thoughts and imaginations and feelings, and different imaginary forms of thoughts and feelings. No doubt this is symbolical rather than actual. The colour of a thought corresponds with the condition of the mind. It shows the element to which the thought belongs; whether the thought belongs to the fire element, to the water element, or to the earth element. This means that it is, for instance, fire which is behind the thought; that fire produces its colour around the thought as an atmosphere surrounding it. And when such visionary people see the thought-form in the form of colour, what surrounds the thought is according to the character belonging to that thought.

A thought connected with earthly gain is of the earth element; a thought of love and affection represents the water element, it is spreading sympathy; a thought of revenge and destruction and hurt and harm represents fire; a thought of enthusiasm, courage, hope, aspiration represents air; a thought of retirement, solitude, quiet, peace, represents ether. These are the predominant characteristics of thoughts in connection with the five elements.

There is no superiority of one element over another. The superiority of thought is according to the outlook of the mind. For instance, a person standing on the ground sees a horizon before him; this is one outlook; another person is standing on the top of a tower and from there he is looking at the wide horizon; his outlook is different. It is according to the outlook that the thought is superior or inferior. Besides, no one can take a thought, any thought-picture, and say, 'This is an inferior thought' or 'This is a superior thought'. Thought is not an earthly coin which is inferior or superior; what makes it inferior or superior is the motive behind it.

The form of thought also has its effect, its effect upon the form and expression of someone. For a thought has a particular language which manifests in a kind of writing, if one could read it. This language can be read in the face and form of a person. Everyone reads this to a certain extent, but it is difficult to define the letters, the alphabet of this language. There is one mystery which opens a door into thought-language, and that is the vibrations and what direction the vibrations take. A thought works upon and around a person's form, and becomes manifest to the eyes upon his visible being. And there is a certain law which governs its work; and that law is the law of direction; if the forces are going to the right, or to the left, or upward, or downward. It is this direction of the vibrations of thought which produces a picture, so that a seer can see this picture as clearly as a letter. No doubt for a seer it is not necessary to read the thought from the visible form of a person, because he cannot be a seer if he is not open to a reflection, so that every thought is reflected in him, which makes things even more clear. Besides that, he need not see the picture of the thought on the visible form in order to know it; the atmosphere tells him. The thought itself calls out, 'I am this thought', whatever it may be; because thought has a language, a voice; thought has a breath and has life.

CHAPTER VIII

MEMORY

MEMORY is a mental faculty as distinct as mind, a recording machine which records all that falls upon it through the five senses. What one sees, hears, smells, touches, tastes is recorded upon the memory. A form, a picture, an image, once seen, sometimes remains in the memory for the whole life if it is well recorded by the memory. In the life of the world one hears so many words during the day, and yet some words which the memory has recorded remain for the whole life, as living as ever. So it is with music. Once a person has heard wonderful music and it is recorded on his mind, it remains for ever and ever. And memory is such a living machine that you can produce that record at any time; it is there. A good perfume once experienced, once perceived, is remembered; the feeling of taste remains; the feeling of touch memory holds.

Things do not remain in the memory as in a notebook. For as the notebook is dead, so what remains in the notebook is dead; but memory is living, and so what remains in the memory is living also, and has a living sensation. A record of pleasant memory is sometimes so precious that one wishes to sacrifice this objective world for such a record. I was very touched once by seeing a widow whose relations wished me to tell her to go into society, to mix with people, to live a more worldly life. I went to advise her on that subject. But when she told me gently, 'All the experiences of this world's life, however pleasant, do not afford me pleasure. My only joy is the memory of my beloved; other things give me unhappiness, other things make me miserable. If I find joy, it is in the thought of my beloved', I could not say one word to change her mind. I thought it would be a sin on my part to take her away from her joy. If the memory had been a misery for her, I would have spoken to her otherwise. But it was a happiness for her, it was the only happiness. I thought that here was the living Sati. I had only a great esteem for her, and could not speak one word.

In memory the secret of heaven and hell is to be found. As Omar Khayya'm has said in his Ruba'iyat, 'Heaven is the vision of fulfilled desire, and hell the shadow of a soul on fire'. What is it? Where is it? It is only in the memory. Therefore memory is not a small thing. It is not something which is hidden in the brain. It is something living, and it is something so vast that a limited mind cannot conceive of it; it is something which is a world in itself.

But people might ask, 'What is it, then, if a person has lost his memory? Is it caused by a disorder in the brain?' In the first place no one really loses his memory. A person may lose his memory, but it does not lose him; because the memory is one's own being. What happens is that the disorder of the brain makes it incapable of distinguishing what the memory contains. Therefore a person who has lost his memory owing to the disorder in the brain, still has a memory just the same. That memory will become clearer to him after death. For the mind is quite distinct from the body; it is something apart, standing independent of the body. The mind is dependent on the body for perceiving the outer experiences which it takes in through the senses; but the mind is independent of the body for holding its treasures which it has collected through the outer world and retaining them.

As we are accustomed to experience everything through the vehicle of this body, even our feelings, this makes us dependent for some time upon the body; but it does not mean that we cannot experience all that belongs to mind without the help of the body. Also, if a person lifted himself from his objective being, he would find his memory intact. Only, the memory cannot function in the brain which is out of order, but the impressions during the time that a person has lost his memory are still recorded; they come back later on. Only at the time when a person has lost his memory, the memory is not actively taking the record of things given to it.

To have a good memory is not only a good thing; it is a bliss, it is a sign of spirituality; because it shows that the light of the intelligence is clear and is illuminating every particle of the brain. A good memory is a sign of great souls. Besides memory is the treasure where one's knowledge has been stored. If a person cannot draw the knowledge he has collected from his memory, then his dependence upon the book is of little worth.

One day, six months after I had been received by my Murshid as his pupil, he began to speak on metaphysics. Being metaphysically inclined myself, I eagerly welcomed the opportunity. During those six months I was never impatient, I had never shown any eagerness to know more than what I was allowed to know. I was quite contented at the feet of the Master; that was everything to me. Nevertheless it was a great stimulus to my mind to hear from him something about metaphysics. But as soon as I took out my notebook from my pocket my Murshid ended the subject. He said nothing; but from that day I learnt a lesson: 'By this he means that my notebook must not be the storehouse of my knowledge. There is a living notebook; and that is my memory, a notebook which I shall carry with me all through life and through the hereafter.'

No doubt we always write on paper things belonging to the earth, figures and other facts; but things pertaining to the spiritual order of things, to the divine law, are of much greater importance. The notebook is not made for them, it is in the memory they must be treasured, for memory is not only a recording machine. It is at the same time a fertile ground; and what is put there is continually creative; it is doing something there. Therefore you do not only possess something that you have deposited, there is its interest also.

But at the same time we learn in the Sufi path how to erase from the record a living memory of something in the past; that is the work which we accomplish by concentration and meditation. It is not an easy thing; it is the most difficult, but also the most valuable thing there is. This is why we keep our teachings free from speculations and beliefs and doctrines and dogmas, for we believe in actual work with ourselves. What if you were told a thing one day and you believed one day, and next day you doubted and did not believe? If you were told there is a house in the seventh heaven and a palace, what would it do for you? It would only answer your curiosity; it would take you nowhere. It is therefore by the way of meditation that we attain to those things. We can erase from the memory what we wish to; and in this way we are able to make our heaven ourselves. The whole secret of esotericism lies in controlling the mind and in working with it as an artist would work on a canvas and produce whatever he likes.

How can one destroy undesirable thoughts? Must they always be destroyed by the one who has created them? Yes, it is the creator of the thought who must destroy it; and it is not in every person's power to destroy it. Yet the same mind which has reached mastery, which can create as it wishes, can also destroy. When we are able to produce on the canvas of our heart all that we wish, and to erase all we wish, then we arrive at that mastery for which our soul craves; we fulfil that purpose for which we are here. Then we become the masters of our destiny. It is difficult, but that is the object that we pursue in life.

Sometimes memory is weakened by too great a strain upon it. When one tries to remember, it puts a strain upon something which is natural. It is the nature of memory to remember. But when you put a strain upon it: 'You must remember', then it will forget. For the very fact that you have strained it will make it forget.

One must not try to impress one's mind more deeply than it naturally becomes impressed. It is not necessary to use the brain when trying to remember something, because by using the brain one only strains it. The memory is at the command of a person. If he wants to know about something, without his straining the brain it must come instantly. It is an automatic machine; it must bring before you instantly all that you wish to know.

If it does not work in that way, there is something wrong with it. Certainly, association of ideas helps. It is just as when a person has lost the thought of the horse from his mind, and the stable reminds him. Your attention is quite enough; will-power must not be used to remember things; and it is a wrong method that people are applying at present, when they say that in order to remember things one must will it. By willing one weakens. Besides this, a balance between activity and repose is necessary.

Memory is never lost. What happens is that when the mind is upset the memory becomes blurred; because it is the stillness of mind which makes one capable of distinguishing all that one's memory contains. When the mind is upset, when a person is not tranquil, then naturally one is not able to read all that the memory has recorded. It is not true that memory gives away what is stored in it. It is only that man loses the rhythm of his life by over-excitement, nervousness, weakness of nerves, anxiety, worry, fear, confusion; and it is that which causes a kind of turmoil in the mind, and one cannot distinctly feel things which have been once recorded in the memory. For instance, a person who cannot easily learn by heart, in order to better this condition must make his mind tranquil as the first thing. That is the mental way. But a physical way of making the memory better is to eat less and sleep normally, not work too much, not worry very much, and to keep all anxiety and fear away. One need not work with memory in order to make it clear; what is required is to make oneself tranquil and rhythmical and peaceful in order to make memory distinct.

CHAPTER IX

WILL

WILL is not *a* power, but it is *all* the power there is. How did God create the world? By will. Therefore what in us we call will-power in reality is a God-power, a power which by our recognizing its potentiality increases and proves to be the greatest phenomenon in life. If there is any secret that can be learned behind the mystery of the world of phenomena, it is will-power; and it is by will-power that all we do, physically or mentally, is accomplished. Our hands, with all their perfect mechanism, cannot hold a glass of water if there is no will-power to support them. A person may seem to be healthy; if will-power fails him, he will not be able to stand. It is not the body which makes us stand upright; it is our will-power. It is not the strength of the body that makes us move about; it is will-power holding the body, which makes it move. Therefore in reality birds do not fly with their wings, they fly with will-power; fishes do not swim with their body, they swim with their will-power. And when man has the will to swim, he swims like a fish.

Man has been able to accomplish tremendous things by will-power. Success and failure are its phenomena. It is only the phenomenon of will which brings one to success; and when will fails, however qualified and intelligent the person, he fails. Therefore it is not a human power, it is a divine power in man. And its work with mind is still greater. For no man can hold a thought in his mind for a moment if there is not the strength of will to hold it. If a person cannot concentrate, cannot keep his thought still for a moment, it means that will-power fails him; for it is will which holds a thought.

Now coming to the question of what will-power is made of: in poetical words will-power is love, in metaphysical terms love is will-power. And if one says God is love, it really means God is will; for the love of God manifests after the creation, but the will of God caused the creation. Therefore the original aspect of love is will. When a person says, 'I love to do it', it means, 'I will to do it', which is a stronger expression meaning, 'I fully love to do it'.

Also, will and consciousness are fundamentally the same. It is the two expressions of one thing which make them distinct; this duality comes out of unity. It is God's own Being that in expression is will, in response consciousness; in other words in action it is will, in stillness it is consciousness; just as fundamentally sound and light are one and the same thing. In one condition the friction of vibrations produces light; in another condition the same vibrations are audible. This is why the nature and character of sound and light are one and the same. And so are the nature and character of consciousness and will, because fundamentally both things belong to God's own Being.

The Qur'an says, 'We said, "Be"; and it became'. This is a key to the world of phenomena. To the progressive world, to the advanced thought, this is the key which shows how manifestation came into existence. It came into existence in answer to that Will which expressed itself in saying, 'Be'; and it became. And this phenomenon does not only belong to the origin of things; this phenomenon belongs to the whole being of things, to the whole process of manifestation.

We are apt to look at this whole creation as a mechanism, as man today looks at it; and we do not stop to think how a mechanism can exist without an engineer. And what is mechanism? It is only an expression of the will of the engineer, an engineer who for his convenience made the mechanism. But as we do not see before us the engineer, and only see the mechanism, we involve ourselves in the laws of the working of this mechanism, and forget the engineer by whose command this whole mechanism is going on. As Rumi, the great inspirer and philosopher, has said in his Masnavi, 'The earth, water, fire, air, these seem to us like things or objects; but before God they are living beings; they stand as His obedient servants, and they obey the divine Will'. A part of that Will we inherit as our own divine heritage, and it is our consciousness of it which makes it greater; if we are not conscious of it, it becomes smaller. It is the optimistic attitude towards life which develops will; the pessimistic attitude reduces it, robs it of its great power. Therefore if there is anything that hinders our progress in life it is our own selves. And it is proved a thousand times over that there is no one in the world who can be a worse enemy to us than ourselves; for in every failure we see ourselves to be standing in our own light.

The earth holds the seed; and the result is that a plant springs out of it. And so it is with the heart: the heart holds the seed of thought, and there also a plant springs and brings the fruit of fulfilment. But it is not only the thought, but the power of holding the thought which is of very great importance. Therefore the factor of the heart, a factor which holds the thought, is of very great importance for the fulfilment of life's purpose. Often a person says, 'I try my best, but I cannot concentrate my mind, I cannot make my mind still'. That is true; but it is not true that he tries his best. 'Best' does not end there; 'best' really brings the purpose to its fulfilment.

The mind is just like a restive horse. Bring a wild horse, and yoke it to a carriage; it is such a strange experience for it that it will kick and jump and run, and try to destroy the carriage. And so it is a weight for the mind to carry when you make the mind take one thought and hold that thought for a while. It is then that the mind becomes restive, because it is not accustomed to discipline. The mind by itself will hold a thought; the mind will hold so fast to a thought of disappointment or a pain or a grief, a sorrow or a failure, that you cannot take away from its grip that which it holds by itself. But when you ask the mind to hold this particular thought, then the mind says, 'I will not hold it'. When once the mind is disciplined by concentration, by the power of will, then the mind becomes your servant. And once mind has become your servant, then what more do you wish? Then your world is your own, you are the king of your kingdom.

No doubt one might ask why we should not let the mind be free also, as we are free. But we and mind are not two things. It is like saying, 'Let the horse be free and the rider be free'. Then the horse wants to go to the south and the rider wants to go to the north. How can they go together? There are people who would even say, 'Let us be free, and the will be free'. But what are we then? Then we are nothing. Discipline has a place in man's life. And self-discipline, however difficult and tyrannical it might seem to us in the beginning, yet is that which in the end makes the soul the master of self. It was not in vain that the great sages and adepts led an ascetic life; there was a purpose in it. It is not something to follow, but it is something to understand: what use they made of it, what they accomplished by it. It was self-discipline, it was the development of will-power.

All the lack that we find in life is the lack of will, and all the blessing that comes to us comes by the power of will. Some think that power of will does not depend on ourselves; that it is given to some as a grace, as a blessing. It does not depend on ourselves, but it is ourselves. It is grace and blessing no doubt, but at the same time it is to be found in ourselves, it is our very being.

CHAPTER X

REASON

WHEN we analyse the word reason it opens before us a vast field of thought. In the first place every doer of good and every evil-doer has a reason to support his action. When two persons quarrel, each says he is in the right, because each has a reason. To a third person, perhaps, the reason of one or other may appear to be more reasonable, or perhaps he will say that both have no reason and that he has reason on his side. All disputes, arguments and discussions seem to be based upon reason.

And yet reason is something which, before one has analysed it, is nothing but an illusion and keeps one continually in perplexity. The cause of all disharmony, all disagreement, is the perplexity which is caused by not understanding another's reason. But one might think, what is reason? Where does it belong? Reason belongs to both earth and heaven: its depth heavenly, its surface earthly; and that which fills the gap in the form of reason, between earth and heaven, is that middle part of it which unites it. And therefore reason can be either most confusing, or most enlightening. There is the depth of reason, the most perfect reasoning, which belongs to heaven; and there is another reasoning which belongs to the earth. If a person says to someone, 'Why did you take another person's raincoat?' he may answer, 'Because it was raining'. He has a reason; another reason is needed to think, 'Why, I must not take another person's raincoat. Although it was raining, yet it was not my raincoat.' That is another reason altogether. Do you think that the thieves and robbers, the great assassins have no reason? Sometimes they have great reasons, but reason on the surface. Can a thief not say in order to justify his action, 'What is it to that rich person if he lost so much money? Here am I, a poor man, I could make a better use of it. I have not robbed him of every penny; I have just taken as much as I wanted. It is useful, I can do some good with it.'

Besides, reason is the servant of mind. The mind feels like praising a person: the reason at once brings a thousand things in praise of him, in his favour. The mind has a desire to hate a person: at once reason brings perhaps twenty arguments in favour of hating him. And so we see that a loving friend can find a thousand things that are good and beautiful in his friend; an adversary will find a thousand faults in the best person in the world, and he has reasons.

In French conversation they say, 'Vous avez raison', but one can say that everyone has reason. It is not sometimes that one has a reason; everyone always has a reason; only it depends which reason it is. Is it the earthly reason, or is it the heavenly reason, or is it the middle reason? It is natural that heavenly reason does not agree with earthly reason.

Now coming to the essence of things, where do we get reason, where do we learn it? The earthly reason we learn from our earthly experiences. When we say, 'This is right, and that is wrong', it is only because we have learnt from the earth to say, 'This is right, and that is wrong'. An innocent child, who is just born on the earth and who has not yet learned to know right and wrong, to him it is nothing; he has not yet acquired that earthly reason. There is also a reason which is beyond earthly reason. The person who has taken someone's raincoat has a reason 'because it was raining'. But there is a reason beyond it; and that is that it does not belong to him. He should rather have got wet through in the rain than taken this raincoat. That is another reason; that is reason behind reason.

Then there is the sense of reason, which is heavenly reason. It is that reason which not everyone understands; it is that reason which is discovered within themselves by the seers and sages and mystics and prophets. It is upon this reason that religions are founded; in the soil of this reason the ideas of mysticism and philosophy spring as plants, and bear fruits and flowers. When a pupil is expected to listen to the reason of his teacher instead of disputing over it, it is in order to recognize that heavenly reason behind it; and to know that there comes a time in one's life when one's eyes are open to the essential reason. And what is that reason called? That reason is called Bodhisatva. Satva means essence, and Bodhī or Buddh means reason; from this word comes the title of Gautama Buddha.

How is one to arrive at that reason? By arriving at that rhythm which is called satva. There are three rhythms: *Tamas, Rajas,* and *Satva.* A person whose rhythm of life is Tamas knows earthly reason; he whose life is Rajas knows beyond earthly reason, a reason which is hidden behind a reason; and the one who begins to see or live in the rhythm of Satva, begins to see the cause of every reason, which is in the profound depths of the whole being; and that is God's reason.

Reason is attached to an impulse, and reason is attached to thought. The reason which is attached to thought is the middle part of reason; the reason which is attached to impulse is the lower part of reason. But the reason which is inspiring is heavenly reason. This reason unfolds divine light; it comes by awakening to this reason which one finds living in the heart of God.

There is a story that Moses was passing with Khidr through a country. Khidr was the Murshid of Moses when Moses was being prepared for prophethood. Moses was first given the lesson of discipline, to keep quiet under all circumstances. When they were walking through the beauty of nature, the teacher and pupil both were quiet. The teacher was exalted in seeing the beauty of nature; the pupil also felt it. And so they arrived on the bank of a river, where Moses saw a little child drowning, and the mother crying aloud, for she could not help. And then Moses could not keep his lips closed; he had to break that discipline and say, 'Master, save him, the child is drowning!' The Murshid said, 'Quiet!' Moses could not keep quiet. He said again, 'Master, Master, save him! The child is drowning!' Khidr said, 'Quiet!' and Moses was quiet. But the mind of Moses was restless; he did not know what to think. 'Can the Master be so thoughtless, so inconsiderate, so cruel, or is the Master powerless?' he asked himself. He could not understand which was which; he did not dare to think such a thought, and yet it made him very uncomfortable.

As they went further they saw a boat sinking; and Moses said, 'Master, that boat is sinking, it is going down'. The Master again ordered him to be quiet; so then Moses was quiet, but he was still most uncomfortable. When they arrived home, he said, 'Master, I thought that you would have saved this little innocent child from drowning, and that you would have saved that boat which was going down in the water. But you did nothing. I cannot understand, but I would like to have an explanation.' The Master said, 'What you saw I saw also. We both saw. So there was no use in your telling me. You did not need to tell me what was happening, for I knew. If I had thought that it was better to interfere, I could have done it. Why did you take the trouble to tell me, and spoil your vow of silence?' He continued, 'The child who was drowning was going to bring about a conflict between two nations, and thousands and thousands of lives were going to be destroyed in that conflict. When he was drowned this averted the other danger which was to come.' Moses looked at him with great surprise. Then Khidr said, 'This boat that was sinking was a boat of pirates, and was sailing in order to wreck a large ship full of pilgrims, and then to take what was left in the ship and bring it home. Do you think that you and I can be judge of it? The Judge is behind; He knows His actions, He knows His work. When you were told to be quiet, it was to keep your lips closed and to observe everything silently, as I was doing'.

There is a Persian verse which says, 'It is the gardener who knows which plant to rear and which to cut down'.

Shall we all take the same attitude? Shall we not go and help? Yes, you may help. But at the same time if a spiritual person does not seem to do what you expect him to do, you do not need to talk about it; for you must know that there is some reason. You do not need to judge him. For the more you evolve the more your reason becomes different. And so no one has the power to judge another; but one may do one's best oneself.

No doubt in the present time education is a great hindrance with children. The children are taught to reason freely with their parents; by reasoning freely when they come to a certain age, they do not stop to think; before they think they argue, they dispute, and ask 'Why not?' 'Why?'; and in this way they never get to that heavenly reason. For in order to arrive at that heavenly reason a responsive attitude is necessary, not an exerting attitude. What today a child learns to do is to take an aggressive attitude. He imposes his knowledge upon others. And by the lack of a responsive attitude he loses his opportunity of ever touching that essence of reason which is the spirit of Bodhisatva. This has always been the great difficulty in the lives of evolved souls. What happened with Jesus Christ? In the one place there was earthly reason, in the other there was heavenly reason.

Once I looked at my Murshid and there came to my inquisitive mind a thought, 'Why should a great soul such as my Murshid wear gold-embroidered slippers'. But I checked myself at once, and it was only a thought; it could never have escaped my lips, it was under control. But there it was known. I could not cover my insolence with my lips; my heart was open before my Murshid as an open book. He instantly saw into it, and read my thought. And do you know what answer he gave me? He said, 'The treasures of the earth I have at my feet'.

Once a Murshid had been to the city, and on his return he said, 'Oh, I am filled with joy, I am filled with joy. There was such an exaltation in the presence of the Beloved'. Then his mureed thought, 'There was a beloved and an exaltation; how wonderful! I must go and see also if I cannot find one.' He went through the city, and he came back, and he said, 'Horrible! How terrible the world is! All seem to be at one another's throats; that was the picture I saw. I felt nothing but a depression, as if my whole being was torn to pieces'. 'Yes', the Murshid said, 'you are right'. 'But explain to me', the mureed said, 'why you are so exalted after going out, and why I must be so torn to pieces. I cannot bear it, it is horrible'. The Murshid said, 'You did not walk in the rhythm that I have walked in through the city'. And that means that it is not only the slow rhythm of the walk, but that rhythm with which the mind is moving, that rhythm with which the observation is gained: it is that which makes the difference between one person and another; it is that which brings about the harmony between one person and another.

The person who says, 'I will not listen to your reason', no doubt has a reason as everybody has a reason. But he could have a better reason still if he were able to listen; if he were able to understand the reason of another. The reason of a person's mind is like this: it is just like making circles. One person s mind has made one circle in a minute; another person's mind has made a circle in five minutes; the reason is different. Another person's mind has made a circle in fifteen minutes; his reason is different again. The longer it takes, the wider is the horizon of his vision, and so is his outlook on life.

Reasoning is a ladder. By this ladder one can rise, and from this ladder one may fall. For if one does not go upward by reasoning, then it will help one to go downward too; because if for every step one takes upward there is a reason, so there is a reason for every step downward. No doubt this distinction is made to enable one to understand that there is one reason in reality, it is one faculty. One may divide the human body into three parts, but at the same time it is one body, it is one person. Nevertheless, reason is a great factor and has the possibility in it of every curse and of every blessing.

CHAPTER XI

THE EGO

WHEN we think of that sense and that feeling, or that inclination, which makes us affirm the word 'I', it is difficult to point out what it is, what is its character; for it is something which is beyond human comprehension. That is why, when a person wishes to explain, even to himself, what it is, he points to what is nearest to him, declaring, 'This is the one whom I have called "I".' Therefore every soul which has, so to speak, identified itself with anything, has identified itself with the body, its own body; because that is the thing which one feels and realizes to be nearest to one, and which is intelligible as one's being. What a person knows of himself is his body; that is the first thing; and he calls himself his body, he identifies himself with his body. For instance, if one asks a child, 'Where is the boy?' he will point to his body; that is what he can see of himself, or can imagine of himself.

This forms a conception in the soul. The soul conceives this deeply; so that after this all other objects, persons or beings, colour or line, are called by different names, for the soul has not conceived of them as itself, as it already has a conception of itself; and that is this body, which it has first known or imagined to be itself. All else that it sees, it sees through its vehicle which is the body, and calls it something separate, something different.

In this way duality in nature is produced; from this comes 'I' and 'you'. But as 'I' is the first conception of the soul, it is wholly concerned with this; with all else it is only partly concerned. Everything else that exists besides this body which it has recognized as its own being, it calls according to its relation with it. And that relation it establishes by calling it 'my', which is between 'I' and 'you': 'you are my brother', or 'my sister', or 'my friend'.

This makes a relationship; and according to this relationship the other object or person stands nearer to or further from the soul.

All other experiences that the soul has in the physical world, in the mental spheres, become a sort of world around it. The soul lives in the midst of it; yet the soul never for one moment feels with anything that it is 'I'. This 'I' it has reserved, and made captive in one thing only, and that is its body. Of everything else the soul thinks that it is something else, something different; 'it is near to me, it is dear to me, because it is related; it is close to me, but it is not me'. 'I' stands as a separate entity, holding, collecting all that one has got and which makes one's own world.

As one becomes more thoughtful in life, so this conception of 'I' becomes richer. It becomes richer in this way, that one also sees that, 'it is not the body only, but it is also the thought which I think that is my thought; the imagination is my imagination; my feelings are also a part of my being; and therefore I am not only the body, but I am my mind also.' In this next step taken by the soul in the path of realization the soul begins to feel, 'I am not only a physical body, but also a mind'. This realization in its fullness makes one declare, 'I am a spirit', which means, 'The body and mind and feeling, all together, with which I identify myself, it is these which are the ego'.

When the soul goes further in the path of knowledge it begins to find that there is something which feels itself, or which feels the inclination to call itself 'I', that feeling of 'I'-ness; but that at the same time all with which it identifies itself is not itself. And the day when this idea springs up in the heart of man he has begun his journey in the path of truth. Then analysing begins, and he begins to find out, 'This is my table, and this is my chair. All that I can call "my", belonging to me, is not really myself.' Then he also begins to say 'I identify myself with this body; but this is "my body", just as I say "my table", or "my chair". So the being which is saying "I", in reality is separate; it is something which has taken even this body for its use; this body is only an instrument.' And he thinks, 'If it is not this body which I can call "I", then what else is it? Is it my imagination with which I should identify myself?' But even that one calls 'my imagination', 'my thought', or 'my feeling'. So therefore even the thought, feeling, or imagination is not the real 'I'. What affirms 'I' remains the same even after he discovers the false identity.

You read in the ten Sufi Thoughts[1] that perfection is attained by the annihilation of the false ego. The false ego is what does not belong to that ego, and what that ego has wrongly conceived to be its own being. When that is separated by understanding life better, then the false ego is annihilated. One need not develop for it. In order to annihilate this body or in order to annihilate the mind a person has to analyse himself and ask, 'Where do I stand? Do I stand as a remote, exclusive being? If this is a remote and an exclusive being, then it must be found out.' Then the question is how to find out.

If once this is realized, the work of the spiritual path is accomplished. As in order to make the eyes see themselves one has to take a mirror to see the reflection of these eyes, so in order to make this real being manifest, the whole being, the body and mind, have been made as a mirror, that in this mirror this real being may see itself and realize its independent being. What we have to achieve by the path of initiation, by the way of meditation, by spiritual knowledge, is to realize it by making ourselves a perfect mirror.

In order to explain this idea the faqirs and dervishes have told a story. A lion roaming through the desert found a little lion cub playing with the sheep. It happened that the little lion had been reared with the sheep, and so he had never had a chance or an occasion to realize what he was. The lion was greatly surprised to see a young lion cub running away with the same fear of a lion as the sheep. The lion jumped in among the flock of sheep, and roared, 'Halt, halt!' But the sheep ran, and the little lion ran also. The lion pursued the lion cub only, not the sheep, and said, 'Wait, I wish to speak to you.' The cub answered, 'I tremble, I fear, I cannot stand before you.' The lion said, 'Why are you running about with the sheep; you are a little lion yourself.' 'No', said the cub, 'I am a sheep, I tremble. I am afraid of you, let me go, let me go with the sheep.' 'Come along', said the lion; 'come with me, I will take you and I will show you what you are before I let you go.' Trembling and yet helpless, the little lion followed the lion to a pool of water. There the lion said, 'Look at me, and look at yourself. Are we not closer, are we not near? You are not like the sheep, you are like me'.

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[1] See Vol. I p. 13 ss.

Through the whole spiritual process what we learn is to disillusion this false ego. The annihilation of this false ego is its disillusionment. When once it is disillusioned, then the true ego realizes its own merit. It is in this realization that the soul enters the kingdom of God; it is in this realization that the soul is born again; a birth which opens the doors of heaven.

In order to be conscious of itself, the soul need not have mind and body to exist; it does not depend upon mind and body for its existence, for its life; just as the eyes do not depend upon the mirror to exist; they only depend upon the mirror to see their reflection. Without it the eyes will see all things, but they will never see themselves. An example is the intelligence. The intelligence cannot know itself unless it has something intelligible to hold; then the intelligence realizes itself. A person with a poetic gift, who is born a poet, never realizes himself to be a poet till he has put his idea on paper, and his verse has struck a chord in his own heart. That is the time when he thinks, 'I am a poet'; till then there was a gift of poetry in him, but he did not know it.

The eyes do not become powerful by looking in the mirror; only, the eyes know what they are like when they see their reflection. The pleasure is in realizing one's merits, one's gifts, what one possesses; and it is in realizing that the merit lies. But no doubt it would be a great pity if the eyes thought, 'We are as dead as this mirror', or if in looking in the mirror they thought, 'We do not exist except in the mirror'. So the false ego is the greatest limitation.

Though the soul feels apart from other beings, does it not feel one with God? Not even with God. How could it? A soul which is captive in a false conception, which cannot see the barrier removed between itself and its neighbour, how can this soul remove its barrier to God, whom it has not known yet? For every soul's belief in God is a conception after all; because it is taught by a priest and written in a scripture, because the parents have said that there is a God; that is all. That soul knows that somewhere there is a God, but it is always liable to change its belief; and unhappily the further it advances intellectually, the further it goes from that belief. A belief which a pure intelligence cannot always hold will not go far. It is by the understanding of that belief that the purpose of life is fulfilled. There is a saying in the Gayan, 'The uncovering of the soul is the discovering of God'.

It is not easy for the soul to dismiss mind and body in death, when even in life a person cannot dismiss his thoughts of depression and sorrow and disappointment. The impressions of happiness and of sorrows in the past one holds in one's own heart; prejudice and hatred, love and devotion, everything that has gone deep in oneself. If the ego holds its prison around itself, it takes this prison with it; and there is only one way of being delivered from it, and that is through self-knowledge.

The ego itself is never destroyed; this is the one thing that lives, and this is the sign of eternal life. In the knowledge of the ego there is the secret of immortality. When in the Gayan you read, 'Death dies, and life lives', it is the ego which is life, it is this false condition which is death. The false must fall away some day; the real must always be. And so it is with life: the true living being is the ego; it lives; all else that it has borrowed from different planes and spheres, and in which it has become lost, all that is put away. Do we not see this with our own being? Things that do not belong there do not remain in it, in the blood, in the veins, anywhere; the body will not keep them; it will repel them. And so it is in every sphere; it does not take what does not belong to it. All that is outside it keeps outside. What belongs on earth is kept on earth; the soul repels it. And the destroying of the ego is a word. It is not destroying; it is discovering.

Very often people are afraid of reading Buddhistic books, where the interpretation of Nirvana is given as 'annihilation'. No one wants to be annihilated, and people are very much afraid when they read 'annihilation'. But it is only a matter of the word. The same word in Sanskrit is a beautiful word: Mukti. The Sufis call it Fanà. If we translate it into English it is 'annihilation'; but when we understand its real meaning, it is 'going through' or 'passing through'. And to pass through what? To pass through the false conception, which is a necessity first, and to arrive at the true realization.

CHAPTER XII

MIND AND HEART

THERE are four things: will, reason, memory and thought, together with the ego as the fifth or principal thing, that make up the heart; it is these five things that may be called the heart. But in definitely naming the different parts of this heart, we call the surface of it *mind* and the depth of it *heart*.

It we imagine this heart as a lantern, then the light in the lantern makes it the spirit. We call it a lantern when we do not think of the light; but when there is a light, then we forget the word lantern and we call it light. When we call the heart spirit it does not mean spirit void of the heart; just as it does not mean the light without the lantern, but light in the lantern; although the right use of the word spirit is only as the essence of all things. The essential light and life from which all has come, that is the spirit. But we use the word spirit also in its limited sense; as light is also of the sun, all-pervading light, and at the same time the light in the lantern; that also we call light. People also call a part of one's breast the heart. The reason is that there is an organ in this breast of flesh which is most sensitive to feeling; and naturally, as man cannot grasp the idea of a heart outside the body, he conceives this idea of the heart being a part of his physical body.

The ego stands separate from the above-mentioned four faculties: will, reason, memory and thought. It is just like four fingers and a thumb. These four faculties are faculties, but the ego is a reality; it holds and accommodates within itself the other four faculties, and in order to distinguish it as different from these four faculties we call it the ego.

The difference between thought and imagination is this, that imagination is an automatic working of the mind. If the mind is fine, there is a fine imagination; if the mind is gross, there is a gross imagination; if the mind is beautiful, there is a beautiful imagination. Thought is also an imagination, but an imagination held, controlled and directed by will. Therefore when we say, 'He is a thoughtful person', it means that this person does not think or speak or act on impulse, but behind everything he does there is a will-power which controls and directs the action of the mind.

As the surface of the heart is known by the imagination and thought, so the depth of the mind, which is the heart, is known by feeling. There are nine principal feelings, which can be distinguished as mirth, grief, anger, passion, sympathy, attachment, fear, bewilderment, and indifference. Feelings cannot be limited to these nine, but while we distinguish numerous feelings we may reduce them to nine distinct feelings which one experiences in life. And there are six diseases which belong to the heart: passion, anger, infatuation, conceit, jealousy, and greed or cupidity.

The heart is one of the soul's bodies, the first body of the soul, which goes a long way with the soul, even on its return journey. The heart is the same as the angelic body. The world of feeling is higher than the world of thought. One may say that in a certain way the heart is nearer to the soul, and the mind nearer to the body. But at the same time the soul experiences through the whole being, through the body, through the mind, through the heart, as it happens to be in different planes of existence.

The more one thinks on the subject of the heart, the more one finds that if there is anything that can tell us of our personality, it is the heart; if there is anything by which we feel ourselves, or we know ourselves and what we are, it is the heart and what it contains. And once a person understands the nature, the character and the mystery of the heart, he understands, so to speak, the language of the whole universe.

There are three ways of perception. One way of perception belongs to the surface of mind; that is thought. Thought manifests to our mind with a definite form, line and colour.

The next way of perception is feeling. It is felt by quite another part of the heart; it is felt by the depth of the heart, not by the surface. And therefore the more the heart quality is wakened in a person, the more he perceives the feelings of others. That person is sensitive, because to him the thoughts and feelings of others are clear. The person who lives on the surface does not perceive feelings clearly. Also, there is a difference between the evolution of the two, of the one who lives on the surface of the heart and the other who lives in the depth; in other words, of the one living in his mind and the other living in the heart.

But there is a third way of perception, which is not even by feeling, which may be called a spiritual language. This feeling comes from the deepest depth of the heart. It is the voice of the spirit. It does not belong to the lantern, it belongs to the light; but in the lantern it becomes more distinct and clear, And this perception may be called intuition, there is no better name for it. In order to study life fully these three perceptions must be developed. Then alone one is able to study life fully; and it is by studying it fully that one is able to form a judgment upon it.

CHAPTER XIII

INTUITION

INTUITION rises from the depth of the human heart. It has two aspects: one is dependent upon an outer impression, the other is independent of any outer impression; the former is called impression, and the latter intuition. Intuition is a fine faculty, therefore a feminine faculty; for it comes by responsiveness, and woman is more intuitive by nature than man.

Very often someone says, 'This person gives me such and such an impression', but at the same time there is no reason to prove it; he is perhaps not capable of finding any reason to prove it; nevertheless the impression is right. There are some persons, also some peoples, who are naturally intuitive. For an intuitive person it is not necessary to wait till he finds out about a person; all he needs is one moment. Instantly, as soon as his eyes fall upon someone, it gives rise to an impression which is the former kind of intuition. A person with a fine mind and with a still mind generally has intuition; someone with a gross mind and a restless mind lacks it. Intuition is a supersense; it may be called a sixth sense; it is the essence of all senses. When a person says he sensed something, it does not mean that there were objective reasons to prove that it was so; it means that without any outer reason or objective signs he has sensed it.

Intuition which is independent of impression is of a still deeper nature. For this comes so that before you wish to begin a thing you know what will come out of it; before the beginning of an enterprise you see the result of it. Intuition is sometimes a kind of inner guidance; sometimes it is a kind of warning from within.

How does one perceive it? It is first expressed in the language of feeling; that feeling spreading within the horizon of mind shapes itself, becoming more narrative of its idea; then mind turns it into a form; then language interprets it to you. Therefore it is the feeling heart to which intuition belongs.

Intuition turns into three different conditions in order to become clear enough to be distinguished: a feeling, an imagination, a phrase. One person hears the voice of intuition even when it is in the first process of development; it is he who is more capable of perceiving intuition, and it is he who may be called intuitive. Another person distinguishes it when it expresses itself in the realm of thought. And then there is a third person who can only distinguish his intuition when it is manifested in the form of a phrase.

It is the kind person, the loving person, pure-hearted, of goodwill, who is intuitive. Intuition has nothing to do with learning. An unlettered person can be much more intuitive than one who is most qualified, for it is in quite another domain of knowledge; it comes from quite another direction.

Very often an intuitive person makes a mistake in catching the right intuition, for the intuition comes from one side and his mind reacts from the other side, and he does not know which is which. If he takes the action of his mind for an intuition, once disappointed he loses faith in himself; and so naturally he no longer gives thought to intuition; and that faculty diminishes in him more and more every day.

In the first place, to catch an intuition is the most difficult thing. For in a moment's time both are working, intuition on the one hand and mind on the other; as if two ends of one stick which is placed in the centre upon another stick were to move up and down, and one did not notice which end rose first and which after. And therefore one needs to take very keen notice of the action of the mind, which is gained by the thorough practice of concentration. One must be able to look at one's mind just as at a slate before one; and while looking at it one must be able to shut oneself off from all other sides, fixing one's mind solely upon one's inner being. By developing concentration, by stilling the mind, one can be tuned to the pitch which is necessary to perceive intuition. Besides, if one has once been disappointed in perceiving one's intuition, one must not lose courage; one must go on following it even if it seems a continual mistake. If one continually follows it, then one will come to the right perception of it.

The impulse of an intuitive person is very often guided by intuition; the impulse of a person who lacks intuition may come from another direction, from the surface. Impulse directed by an intuition is desirable. Impulse is just like a little straw floating on the surface of the water; and this straw becomes an impulse when it is pushed by the wave which is coming from behind. And therefore for a right impulse a man gets credit, for a wrong impulse he is blamed. If one saw what is behind the impulse, one would be slow to express one's opinion on the subject.

The dream is another wonder, a phenomenon of the mind. In the dream it is not only imagination and thought that work, but also intuition. Intuitions which rise in the waking state, rise in the dream state and become more clear; for at that time a person is naturally concentrated, his eyes being closed to the outer world. But then also there is the same problem. No sooner has intuition risen from the depth than imagination rises from the surface, and one does not know which is which. That is why many dreams are confused: a part of the dream is expressive of some truth, and a part of the dream is confused.

There is no dream which has no meaning. If the dream has nothing to do with intuition, it is purely an automatic activity of all that the mind has gone through in one's work during the day; it goes on automatically just like a moving picture before one. But even behind that is a meaning, for nothing is projected on the curtain of the mind which does not take root in the soil of the heart, producing similar flowers and fruits. If in the dream intuition is working, then the dream is narrative of something in the past or present, or coming in the future.

A very advanced person does not dream much, nor a very dense person, who never troubles his brain to think. He is quite happy and contented without troubling to think; he does not have many dreams. And do not think that you seldom find such souls; you often meet with souls to whom thinking is a trouble; they would rather not trouble about it.

The mind has a reaction upon the body, the body has a reaction upon mind; and therefore it is natural that a bodily disorder may throw its shadow upon the mind and produce in the mind the same disorder. Dreams of suffocation, continually coming, of drowning and inability to walk and speak, do not come from a condition of health; they are the results of the impressions which have been held in the mind. It is a kind of psychical disorder of the mind; it is a disease of mind; the mind must be cured of it. Dreams of flying have much to do with the idea of biology; also psychically they are expressive of the soul's continual effort to rise above this imprisonment of limitation which it experiences in this earthly life; also the dreams of flying signify a journey awaiting one in the future. And it is the dance of his soul that makes a person sing during sleep.

There is a kind of dream which shows everything upside-down, just like a mirror which shows a fat person thin and a thin person fat, a tall person short and a short person tall. Such a condition of mind comes about also, where everything appears quite the contrary to what it is. But this fault can be traced to a fault of the mind. The mind has turned upside-down, and therefore all that a person sees looks upside-down, especially in that dream state. Sometimes this dream shows quite the opposite to what was, what is, and what is going to be. If a person did not understand this kind of dream, he would interpret it quite contrarily to its real nature.

The symbolical dream is the working of a subtle mind, and it is a most wonderful working. As subtle as is the mentality, so subtle is the symbol in which the imagination or the thought is expresssed. It has been therefore most easy for the mystics to see the evolution of a person from his dreams. The subtler his dreams, the subtler the person is in his evolution. Nevertheless the virtue is not only in subtlety; it is in simplicity. Poets, musicians, thinkers, writers, people of imagination have wonderful dreams; and the splendour of their dreams is in their marvellous symbology.

There are dreams which may be called visions. They are reflections; reflections of persons, of their minds, of worlds, of planes upon which the mind has become focused. If the mind is focused upon some outer world, then the dreams are of that world; if a person is focusing his mind upon himself, then his own thoughts come to him; if the mind is focused on a certain person, then that person, and what is within him, is reflected in the dream; if the mind is focused upon a certain plane of being, then the conditions of that plane are reflected upon the mind. The conditions of dreams are the same as the conditions after death. The deeper one goes into this subject, the more one finds that in the understanding of the dream, its nature, its mystery, its character, one may understand the secret of the whole of life.

CHAPTER XIV

INSPIRATION

INSPIRATION is a higher form of intuition, for it comes as an idea, as a complete theme with its improvisation, as a phrase creative of a poem. Inspiration is a stream, a stream of wonder and bewilderment. For the really inspired person, whether a writer, a poet, a composer, whatever be his work, when once he has received an inspiration he has found satisfaction, not with himself, but with what has come to him. It gives his soul such relief; for the soul was drawing from something and that object from which it was drawing has yielded to the soul, has given it what it was asking for. Therefore inspiration may be called the soul's reward.

It is not by being anxious to receive something that one is able to receive it. It is not by straining the brain that one can write poetry; it is not by worrying for days together than one can compose a piece of music. One who does so cannot receive an inspiration. The one who receives an inspiration is quite tranquil and unconcerned about what is coming. Certainly he is desirous of receiving something, he is passionately longing to conceive it. But it is only by focusing his mind upon the divine Mind that, consciously or unconsciously, man receives inspiration.

The phenomenon is so great and so wonderful that its joy is unlike any other joy in the world. It is in this joy that the inspirational genius experiences ecstasy. It is a joy which is almost indescribable; it is the upliftment of feeling that one is raised from the earth when one's mind is focused on the divine Mind. For the inspiration comes from the divine Mind. What the great musicians, poets, thinkers, philosophers, writers and prophets have left in the world is always uplifting. Although it is not every soul who comprehends their work fully, and therefore can enjoy it fully. But if you can imagine their own enjoyment of what has come to them, there are no words to express it. It is in inspiration that one begins to see the sign of God; and the most materialistic genius begins to wonder about the divine Spirit when once inspiration has begun.

Does it come as a finished picture? Does it come as a written letter? No, it comes to an artist as if his hand was taken by someone else, as if his eyes were closed, his heart was open. He has drawn something, he has painted something and he does not know who painted it, who has drawn it. It comes to a musician as if someone were playing, singing, and he were only taking it down, a complete melody, a perfect air. And after he has written it down, then it enchants his soul. To a poet it comes as if someone were dictating and he were only writing. There is no strain on his brain, there is no anxiety in receiving it.

Because of this many confuse it with spirit communication. Many inspirational people are glad to attribute the inspiration to a spirit, knowing that it does not come from them. But it is not always spirit communication. It is natural that it comes from a living being just now on earth, or from someone who has passed; and yet the most perfect inspiration is always from the divine Mind, and to God alone the credit is due. Even if an inspiration comes through the mind of a living person on earth or through a soul that has passed on to the other side, still it has come from God, for all knowledge and wisdom belong to God.

There are three forms in which inspiration comes by the mediumship of a living being: when you are in the presence of someone who is inspiring; when you are in the thoughts of someone who is inspiring; and when your heart is in a state of perfect tranquillity, and inspiration flowing through the heart of an inspirational person is coming into your heart. It is just like the radio: sometimes you connect it with a certain station, from which you are to receive the music, and sometimes you do not connect it; but it remains a radio machine. If anything passing through is not received, it is not heard; but the sound is there just the same. In the same way one receives inspiration from the above three different sources.

There are different processes in inspiration. It all depends upon how the heart of the person is focused upon the divine Spirit. There may be someone whose heart is focused upon the divine Spirit directly; there is another to whom the divine Spirit is too remote. His heart is focused on a centre, the centre which is focused on the divine Spirit; therefore he receives his message. But it all comes from the divine Spirit just the same. It is a fault on the part of mankind to attribute it to some limited being, who is nothing but a shadow concealing God. Besides, when a person believes that an old Egyptian comes from the other side to inspire him, or an American Indian comes to lead him on his way, he is building a wall between himself and God.

Instead of receiving directly from the source which is perfect and all-sufficient, he is picturing his limited idea, making it a screen between himself and God. The easiest way for the genius is to make himself an empty cup, free from pride of learning or conceit of knowledge; to become as innocent as a child, who is ready to learn whatever may be taught to him. It is the soul who becomes as a child before God, longing and yearning at the same time to express music through his soul, who becomes a fountain of God. From that fountain divine inspiration rises, and brings beauty to all those who see the fountain.

There is one step further, and that is when the person has no longer remained simply a poet or a musician or a philosopher, but has become God's instrument only. Then God begins to speak to him through everything, not only in a melody or in verse or in colour or light, but he begins to communicate with God in all forms. Everything he sees above or below, right or left, before or behind, either heavenly or earthly is communicative. He then begins to speak with God, and it is this step which is called revelation.

In the story of Moses it is said that he was looking for fire to bake bread, when he happened to see a light on the top of a mountain. And so in order to take this fire he climbed to the top of the mountain. But that fire became lightning. Moses could no longer withstand that great flashing and he fell to the ground; and when he woke up he began to communicate with God.

This is allegorical. The idea is that Moses was looking for light to make it his life's sustenance; but he had to climb on to the higher planes. It was not possible to get it on the earth where he stood; it was necessary that he should climb to the top. And then it was not only a light, but it was lightning; it was a light which it was beyond the power of Moses to withstand, and he fell down. What is this falling down? To become nothing, to become empty. And when he reached that state of emptiness, then his heart became sonorous, and he found communication with God through everything in the world. In the rock, tree or plant, in the star, or sun, or moon, in whatever he saw he found communication with his soul.

And so everything revealed its nature and its secret to Moses. It is in connection with this revelation that Sa'di says, that every leaf of the tree becomes a page of the sacred scripture once the soul has learnt to read.

APPENDIX I

THE AIMS OF THE SUFI MOVEMENT

The Movement is based upon the Sufi Message brought to the Western world by Hazrat Inayat Khan in 1910.

In his studies as an initiate in one of the ancient Sufi orders, Inayat Khan recognised the basic love and wisdom through which humanity may realize the purpose of life. He saw these two principles as enshrined in the ideals of all religions. He held that by honouring all, and respecting their differences, a basis for mutual understanding could be reached which would not be possible by seeking to convert one to the views of another.

In pursuance of his vision he came to the West, and taught in Europe and America until 1926 when, shortly before his passing, he returned to India. He called his teaching the Sufi Message and to propagate it he founded a body called the International Sufi Movement. In the constitution are enshrined the following Sufi Thoughts:

1. There is one God, the Eternal, the Only Being; none else exists save He.
2. There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads his followers towards the light.
3. There is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture which can enlighten the reader.
4. There is one Religion, the unswerving progress in the right direction towards the ideal, which fulfils the life's purpose of every soul.
5. There is one Law, the Law of Reciprocity, which can be observed by a selfless conscience together with a sense of awakened justice.
6. There is one Brotherhood, the human brotherhood, which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the fatherhood of God.
7. There is one Moral Principle, the love which springs forth from self-denial, and blooms in deeds of beneficence.
8. There is one Object of Praise, the beauty which uplifts the heart of its worshipper through all aspects from the seen to the unseen.

9. There is one Truth, the true knowledge of our being within and without which is the essence of all wisdom.
10. There is one Path, the annihilation of the false ego in the real, which raises the mortal to immortality and in which resides all perfection.

The Movement has the following Objects:

1. To realize and spread the knowledge of unity, the religion of love and wisdom, so that the bias of faiths and beliefs may of itself fall away, the human heart may overflow with love, and all hatred caused by distinctions and differences may be rooted out.
2. To discover the light and power latent in man, the secret of all religion, the power of mysticism, and the essence of philosophy, without interfering with customs or belief.
3. To help to bring the world's two opposite poles, East and West, closer together by the interchange of thought and ideals, that the Universal Brotherhood may form of itself, and man may meet with man beyond the narrow national and racial boundaries.

Regarding the aims of the Movement, we quote as follows from the words of Inayat Khan:

"The purpose of the Sufi Movement is to work towards unity. Its main object is to bring humanity, divided as it is into so many different sections, closer together in the deeper understanding of life. It is a preparation for a world service, chiefly in three ways. One way is the philosophical understanding of life; another is bringing about brotherhood among races, nations, and creeds; and the third way is the meeting of the world's greatest need, which is the religion of the day. Its work is to bring to the world that natural religion which has always been the religion of humanity: to respect one another's belief, scripture,and teacher. The Sufi message is the echo of the same divine message which has always come and will always come to enlighten humanity. It is not a new religion; it is the same message which is being given to humanity. It is the continuation of the same ancient religion which has always existed and will always exist, a religion which belongs to all teachers and all the scriptures.

Sufism in itself is not a religion nor even a cult with a distinct or definite doctrine, No better explanation of Sufism can be given than by saying that any person who has a knowledge of both outer and inner life is a Sufi. Thus there has never at any period of the world's history been a founder of Sufism, yet Sufism has existed at all times.

The present-day Sufi Movement is a movement of members of different nations and races united together in the ideal of wisdom; they believe that wisdom does not belong to any particular religion or race, but to the human race as a whole. It is a divine property which mankind has inherited; and it is in this realization that the Sufis, in spite of belonging to different nationalities, races, beliefs, and faiths, still unite and work for humanity in the ideal of wisdom.

The Sufi message warns humanity to get to know life better and to achieve freedom in life; it warns man to accomplish what he considers good, just, and desirable; it warns him before every action to note its consequences by studying the situation, his own attitude, and the method he should adopt.

Sufism not only guides those who are religious, mystical, or visionary, but the Sufi message gives to the world the religion of the day: and that is to make one's life a religion, to turn one's occupation or profession into a religion, to make one's ideal a religious ideal. The object of Sufism is the uniting of life and religion, which so far seem to have been kept apart. When a man goes to church once a week, and devotes all the other days of the week to his business, how can he benefit by religion? Therefore the teaching of Sufism is to transform everyday life into a religion, so that every action may bear some spiritual fruit.

The method of world reform which various institutions have adopted today is not the method of the Sufi Movement. Sufis believe that if evil is contagious, goodness must be even more so. The depth of every soul is good; every soul is searching for good, and by the effort of individuals who wish to do good in the world much can be done, even more than a materialistic institution can achieve. No doubt for the general good there are political and commercial problems to be solved; but that must not debar individuals from progress, for it is the individual progress through the spiritual path which alone can bring about the desired condition in the world.

The Sufi message is not for a particular race, nation, or church. It is a call to unite in wisdom. The Sufi Movement is a group of people belonging to different religions, who have not left their religions but who have learned to understand them better, and their love is the love for God and humanity instead of for a particular section of it. The principal work that the Sufi Movement has to accomplish is to bring about a better understanding between East and West, and between the nations and races of his world. And the note that the Sufi message is striking at the present time is the note which sounds the divinity of the human soul. If there is any moral principle that the Sufi Movement brings, it is this; that the whole of humanity is like one body, and any organ of that body which is hurt or troubled can indirectly cause damage to the whole body. And as the health of the whole body depends upon the health of each part, so the health of the whole of humanity depends upon the health of every nation. Besides, to those who are awakening and feel that now is the moment to learn more of the deeper side of life, of truth, the Sufi Movement extends a helping hand without asking to what religion, sect, or dogma they belong. The knowledge of the Sufi is helpful to every person, not only in living his life rightly but in regard to his own religion. The Sufi Movement does not call a man away from his belief or chruch: it calls him to live it. In short, it is a movement intended by God to unite humanity in brotherhood and in wisdom."

From *The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan,* Volume IX

APPENDIX II

HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN MEMORIAL TRUST

THE Hazrat Inayat Khan Memorial Trust, located in New Delhi, has been created for religious and charitable purposes.It is founded on the Sufi Message of love, harmony and beauty, as brought by Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882-1927).

Its goal is twofold: It wants to unite all people longing for love, harmony and beauty; and it wants to create not only a physical opportunity for this to happen, but also to create the appropriate atmosphere.

Its original and first activity was—and remains to be—to take care of the Dargah (memorial tomb) of this Sufi saint and master, who has been working for human brotherhood, religious tolerance, mysticism in daily life, the unity of religious ideals and a practical life philosophy. Apart from his being an active and famous musician in the first decade of this century in India, he has been working mainly in the West, bringing about a greater understanding for the values, the philosophy and the music of India, thus preparing ground for later positive developments.

The Trust further undertakes, within the limits set by the donations by Sufis and others, to render financial, material and spiritual help to the needy and destitute, particularly around the Dargah. This help is given to improve the physical health, to leniate immediate suffering, to provide for better living conditions through education, and by providing food to children and other needy persons. The Trust also looks after housing problems in some cases.

During the last fifteen years the Trust has succeeded to make the Dargah into a dignified place and to start making it suitable for the Sufi work. It is becoming a place of peace and happiness, for silence and meditation, a home for everybody looking for these experiences within or without, its atmosphere charging every open-hearted visitor with upliftment and new energy. It is intended to become an ecumenical meeting ground in the real sense of the word for Hindus, Buddhists, Parsis, Sikhs, Jains, Jews, Christians, Muslims, and all others with sympathy in their hearts. At the same time it must be a place for help to our fellow-men. Here everyone can feel at home and free, and can meet people from other circles on 'neutral' yet warm and inspired ground. It is a centre for the spreading of the ecumenical Sufi Message of love, harmony and beauty:

a Message of universal brotherhood and tolerance, a basis for inter-religious brotherhood, a platform for inter-communal understanding, a spiritual centre, and a 'akasha' for love, harmony and beauty.

Gradually, the land around the Dargah had become completely occupied by temporary dwellings refugees and others. To enlarge the area for our direct use was a very difficult and expensive task, because the Trust wanted to help the tenants living on the spot in acquiring better accommodation, even with financial assistance to these tenants living in the very poor huts in this area. In other cases the Trust has given some help to a tenant in starting a business.

In this way it became also possible to make some space available for the social, medical and educative programmes of the Hope Project Charitable Trust, another Sufi organisation working in the name of Hazrat Inayat Khan. The work of this Trust is to provide free social services to those living in the community around the Dargah. It includes the Hazrat Inayat Khan Health Centre, where medical treatment and referral services are provided; two dispensaries are being run, one homeopathic, the other allopathic, which help about 250 patients a day. In the Milk programme milk is distributed everyday to infants, pregnant mothers and the infirm. The Hazrat Inayat Khan Education Centre offers educational and vocational training for children and adults from the Basti; there is a school for women, girls and little boys for educational and vocational training, free of charge. The social work programme offers help to those who are in crisis situations, financial troubles, the disabled and anyone who is in need.

This is quite in the tradition of Sufi Dargahs in India: besides spiritual activities also the material requirements of those in need are provided for.

In 1988 the new Dargah building was inaugurated. It is constructed around the original mazaar (tomb) by ASEMA architects in close contact with the Trust. Its simple design in beautiful material and harmonious proportions may be a symbol for the scope each individual has for the design of his life and the development of his heart. With this new building new opportunities are opening up.

Even before that time the activities of the Trust have grown steadily, and have become more intense. During a greater part of the year there are daily prayers and meditations, weekly qawalli concerts, weekly classes of the Inner School; each month Universal Worship is held, where texts from the sacred scriptures of the major world religions are read; occasionally there are concerts of spiritual classical Indian music, music playing such an important role in Inayat Khan's Message; regularly lectures and courses on modern Sufism are being given. On special occasions there is langar; the free distribution of food to the local population. There is a small library in a preliminary form, on the fields of Sufism, philosophy, psychology, mysticism and (comparative) religion.

Further new activities are being envisaged. The first of these is realised by the publication of this series of volumes on the Sufi Message by Hazrat Inayat Khan. Brotherhood meetings will be organised amongst followers of different religions in order to increase mutual tolerance through understanding and realisation of the essentials we have in common. Courses will be developed on the Sufi Message on subjects such as: the unity of religious ideals, moral culture as the way to God, the development of personality; the tuning of mind, heart and spirit, etc. Further opportunities will be created to participate in meditation, silence, prayer, and spiritual music in order to develop the feeling of sympathy within so that it may radiate. Staging concerts of spiritual classical Indian music will be continued, following the tradition of the great musician, Hazrat Inayat Khan has been. The library may develop into a scholarly one. In close contact with the Hope Charitable Trust further facilities will be offered in the field of social and welfare programmes.

In 1987 the Circle of Friends of Hazrat Sufi Inayat Khan was inaugurated. It is open to all those sympathising with the Sufi Message of today, who feel stirred by the ideas and ideals of love, harmony and beauty, balance and tolerance, understanding and moral culture; those who look for spiritual development yet standing in the world; who want to strengthen the unity of religious ideals; to all those, therefore, who want to unite with other friends in order to share and to contribute to the development of these ideals within oneself, amongst one another, and around, on a foundation of ever growing sympathy. In the meantime meetings of the Circle of Friends are taking place regularly.

For further information on the work of the Trust or on its Circle of Friends apply to

Hazrat Inayat Khan Memorial Trust
129, Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia
(opposite Lodhi Hotel)
New Delhi-110013
Tel. 4625 883

APPENDIX III

ABOUT THE SERIES

Volume I. *The Way of Illumination*
The traditional Sufic outlook on life's values and purpose is re-expressed by Hazrat Inayat Khan in universal and contemporary concepts. Included are: *The Way of Illumination; The Inner Life; The Soul; Whence and Whither* and *The Purpose of Life.*

Volume II. *The Mysticism of Music, Sound and Word*
Sufism traditionally used music as a means of transmitting the essence of mystical insight. Hazrat Inayat Khan integrates this concept of music with elements like sound and silence, vibration and the word, thoughts and inspiration, creating new dimensions for our lives, and thereby recomposing a musical concept extending beyond the tradition of time and culture.

Volume III. *The Art of Personality*
This volume contains the substances of Hazrat Inayat Khan's teaching on our Divine heritage and human relationships, including the science of life's forces. He suggests that the art of personality is the completion of nature and the culmination of heredity. Development of the personality is taken from before birth to the deepest aspects of consciousness.
Included are: *Education; Rasa Shastra; Character-Building and the Art of Personality; Moral Culture.*

Volume IV. *Mental Purification and Healing*
In this volume the Sufi principles are explained concerning the influence the mind may exert on the body, in relation to the spiritual power within us, and concerning the possibilities of spiritual healing in conjunction with modern science.
Included are: *Health; Mental Purification; The Mind World.*

Volume V. *Spiritual Liberty*
This volume contains a wealth of information about different aspects of Sufi mysticism.
Included are: *A Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty: Aqibat: Life after Death; The Phenomenon of the Soul; Love, Human and Divine; Pearls from the Ocean Unseen.*

Volume VI. *The Alchemy of Happiness*
Hazrat Inayat Khan always insisted that spiritual or mystical aspirations are of no avail if one's life is not lived as it should be. Under this title, forty lectures are collected that deal with life in all its aspects.

Volume VII. *In an Eastern Rose Garden*
Talks given by Hazrat Inayat Khan on a variety of subjects. His ability to communicate the unity and relativity of his viewpoint on diverse subjects illustrates the essence of his mystical perception of life.

Volume VIII. *Sufi Teachings*
A collection of talks on various practical and esoteric aspects of traditional Sufi teachings developed by Hazrat Inayat Khan in a modern and universal context.

Volume IX. *The Unity of Religious Ideals*
A systematically arranged collection of Hazrat Inayat Khan's addresses on what is perhaps the most important part of his teaching: the underlying unity of all religious thought and experience.

Volume X. *Sufi Mysticism*
Hazrat Inayat Khan situates the traditional concepts of initiation, discipleship, spiritual teaching and other esoteric aspects of Sufism in today's world. Besides the main part consisting of: *Sufi Mysticism* and *The Path of Initiation and Discipleship*, these subjects are included: *Sufi Poetry, Art: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow; The Problem of the Day.*

Volume XI. *Philosophy, Psychology, Mysticism*
These later talks by Hazrat Inayat Khan, given during the last two years before his death, contain a clear overview of these topics in terms of his Sufic vision. This series of lectures may be considered his *magnum opus.* The Aphorisms at the end are sayings noted down by his pupils which Hazrat Inayat Khan expressed at different times and places to soothe or clarify the seeker.

Volume XII. *The Divinity of the Human Soul*
The first part of this volume deals with the relationship of man and God. The second part is autobiographical. The third part contains four short plays written by Hazrat Inayat Khan for his pupils.
Included are: *The Vision of God and Man; Confessions; Four Plays.*

Volume XIII. *Sacred Readings: The Gatha's*
This volume contains the teachings derived from classes given by Hazrat Inayat Khan to his pupils at the earlier stages of their training.

Volume XIV. *Index to Volume I-XIII*
The volume is published for the first time. It will be of great interest for the student of Sufism.

Besides these volumes *The Dance of the Soul* as the first volume of sayings by Hazrat Inayat Khan. More volumes may be published in due time.

The Dance of the Soul
This collection of aphorisms is just a gem of wisdom and mysticism with a touch of humour. It helps you to discover your very being at the same time as hinting practical solutions for your daily life: feeling, thinking, speaking, acting.

Bowl of Saki (1994)
Wisdom for everyday. The book contains one saying for each day of the year. Space is left open to accommodate for the signature of you friend.

Those desiring particulars regarding the activities in all countries of the Sufi Movement founded by Hazrat Inayat Khan should apply to the International Headquarters of the Movement as follows:

(for activities in India)
Sufi Movement India,
Dargah Hzt. Inayat Khan
129, Basti Hzt. Nizamuddin
New Delhi-110013

(for activities outside India)
General Secretariat,
Sufi Movement,
Anna Paulownastraat 78
2518 BJ The Hague
Holland

THE MYSTICISM OF MUSIC, SOUND AND WORD

Hazrat Inayat Khan

The inspiring practical philosophy of Sufi Hazrat Inayat Khan [Baroda 1882—Delhi 1927] in this guidebook is presented in terms of music, sound and mysticism, and yet it relates to daily life and spirituality in general.

It presents you with insights into the metaphysical foundation of music and sound and its effects upon our daily doings. You may acquire a deeper understanding of both the cosmical manifestation and the rhythm and harmony of everyday life. Although his philosophy is thorough and deep yet the unaccustomed reader will find himself inspired and understanding. The author combines depth and simplicity and speaks to the heart of the reader. You may find new dimensions to your everyday speech, thoughts and actions. The book contains four parts: *The Mysticism of Sound; Music; The Power of the Word;* and *Cosmic Language*.

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